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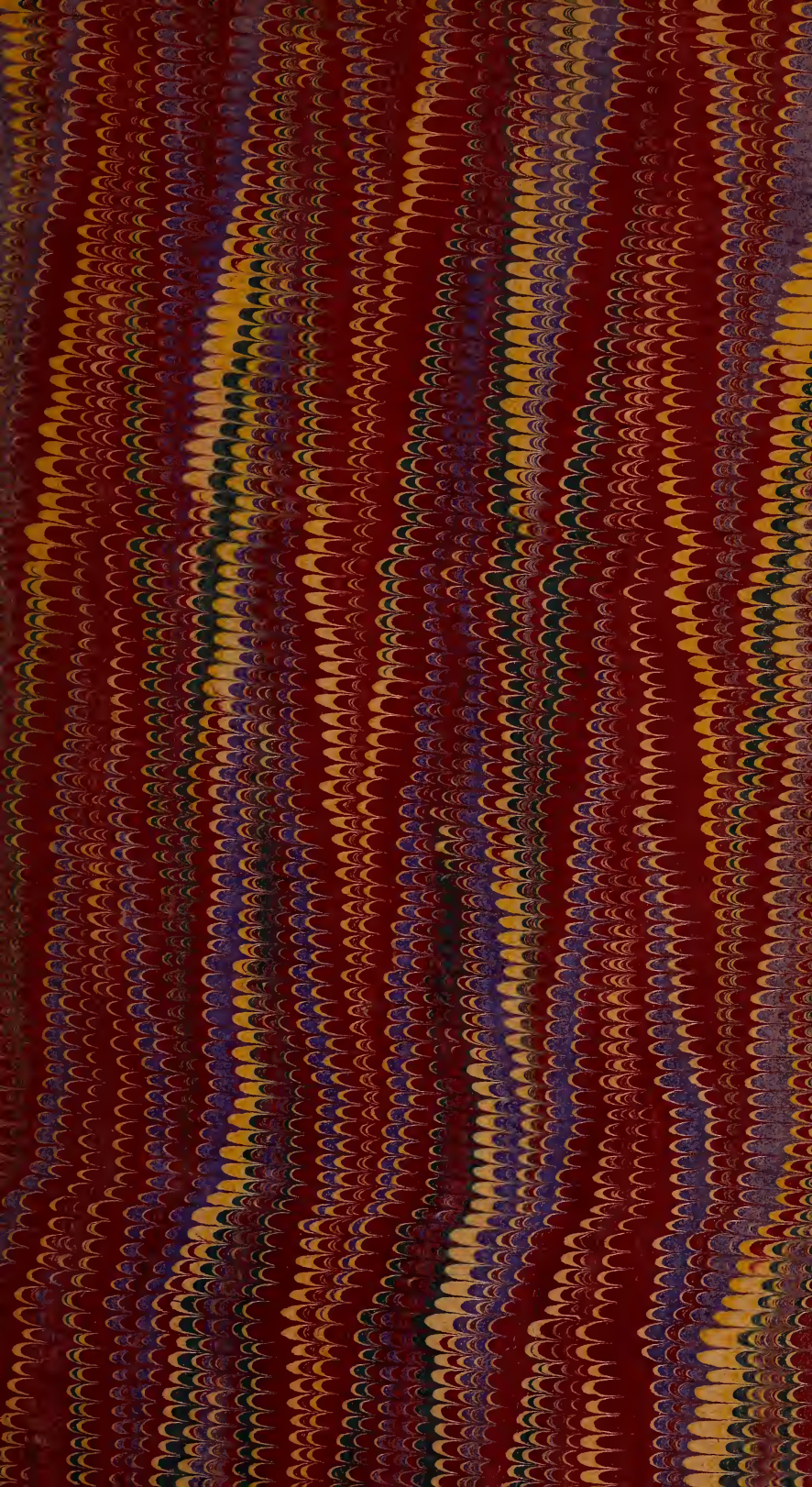
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INIQUITY UNFOLDED!

AN ACCOUNT

OF THE

TREATMENT OF MR. FAIRCHILD

BY THE

DEACONS IN SOUTH BOSTON, AND OTHERS.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

Second Edition.

EXETER:

PUBLISHED FOR THE AUTHOR.

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Advertisement.

THE following pages I submit to the perusal of a candid public. And I do so, because it has hitherto been utterly impossible for those who wish to learn the truth in my case, to attain their object. Out of respect to them, as well as to vindicate myself, I feel compelled to tell my story to the world. And though it is a *long* one, it is yet a *true* one. There is no fiction in it. But as it contains so many strange and almost incredible incidents, I should hardly expect the full confidence of the public in the truth of my statements, did I not produce such documents and refer for proof to such witnesses, as cannot, with any show of reason, be disputed. True, in a few instances I state a conversation which passed between me and some other person alone. If any such person should deny the truth of what I state, I can only place my veracity and the probabilities of the case in the scale against his denial.

If I know my own heart, I have not been moved to this work by any hostile feelings towards those who have persecuted me and brought me almost to my grave; for I believe that even my enemies will admit that I am not a pugnacious man, whatever else I may be. But I publish my story that the cause of justice and truth may triumph, which every candid person in the community must anxiously desire. It grieves me to be obliged to make such developments to the world of the character and doings of individuals, who, by profession, are Christians and members of the visible Church; but it must be remembered that if disgrace and reproach are brought upon the Church by these disclosures, no blame can attach to me. I am not the aggressor. I would gladly have kept concealed from the public eye those iniquities which are now to be unfolded. But my enemies have forced this painful task upon me, and I *must* speak. I have borne and forborne till the very stones have seemed to rebuke me for my silence. One of two things all admit must be true, viz. *I am either the worst of men, or the most persecuted and injured,—either a knave or a martyr.* Let the public read my story and judge for themselves.

J. H. FAIRCHILD.

Exeter, N. H., Dec. 1844.

Entered according to an act of Congress, in the year 1844, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of New Hampshire.



INIQUITY UNFOLDED.

In my late trial at Exeter, I proposed to introduce before the Council some evidence to prove that there was a combination on the part of my personal enemies to destroy my character, and depose me from the ministry. But I had not proceeded far when a remonstrance was sent in by the Deacons of Phillips Church, South Boston, objecting to such a procedure, as they were not present to defend themselves. This part of my defence was then arrested. This I deeply regretted at the time, as I well knew that the Council could not act intelligently without a knowledge of all the facts bearing on the case. These facts I now propose to place before the public, with such references and documents for proof, as must convince all unprejudiced men that what I state is true. I am moved to this, not by any wish to injure my enemies, but because it is due to myself and the public generally, that the whole truth should be told, "let it cut where it may." There is a point beyond which forbearance ceases to be a virtue. I take this course for another reason. It is stated to me by my friends, that my character now suffers, not so much by the evidence brought against me before the Council, as by the ill reports which are circulated with regard to my previous character and habits during my ministry in East Hartford, Ct. Though nothing of this kind was adduced as evidence against me in the presence of the Council when in session, (for if it had I should have been ready to meet it,) yet there is evidence that such things were repeated to my injury out of doors, both to members of the Council and others. On this account it is, that I feel constrained to go into a brief history of my ministerial life, that a candid public may judge between me and my accusers.

I was ordained in East Hartford in June, 1816, and was dismissed, at my own request, in August, 1827. During my ministry there, of more than eleven years, I was as successful, and the people were as united, as usually falls to the lot of a minister and his parishioners. But it has been stated by my enemies, and the story has been industriously circulated, that I left the church in East Hartford because my moral character suffered, and the good people there had lost all confidence in me. Let the following documents tell the story.

The doings of the Church in East Hartford, at a meeting holden on the 6th day of August, 1827.

We, the members of this Church, having received a communication from our beloved Pastor, requesting us to unite with him and the Society in calling an Ecclesiastical Council to dismiss him from his present charge, if they shall judge it expedient, feel it

our duty to state that we deeply regret the causes which have led him to make such a request; that we regard Mr. Fairchild as an orthodox, faithful and successful minister of Christ. He has labored among us abundantly, in word and doctrine, and we esteem him highly in love for his works' sake. Our attachment to him is strong, and our confidence unshaken. By the blessing of God upon his labors this Church has been greatly enlarged. More than eighty have been added to our number since the present year commenced, and upwards of two hundred during his ministry. On these accounts he has become dear to us, and we cannot indulge the thought of his leaving us without peculiar regret. But we feel it to be a Christian duty to lay selfish considerations aside, and to consult his happiness as well as our own. Such being the views and feelings which we entertain, we do hereby give our consent to submit the question, whether Mr. Fairchild shall continue among us as our Pastor or not, to the consideration and decision of a Council. And we give this consent on account of his own urgent request.

TIMOTHY HALL, Moderator.

The above is a correct copy of the doings of the Church,

Attest,

SAMUEL PITKIN, Scribe.

Samuel Pitkin was one of the four deacons of the Church, a gentleman of great respectability and worth, whose praise was in all the churches in that vicinity, and whose spirit, we doubt not, is now in heaven.

I have been informed by several persons who witnessed it, that during that progress of my trial, the Rev. Edward Beecher of Boston, was repeating the story to some members of the Council, and to other gentlemen, that this same deacon Pitkin had lost all confidence in me when I was in East Hartford; so much so that he would not allow his daughters either to ride or walk with me, and this was doubtless urged *in private* as a reason why I should be deposed from the ministry. Dr. B., I trust, is a good man. But like other good men he may be mistaken. He had convicted me of crime long before my trial, and had expressed his conviction to others. He came to the Council prepared, as he stated at the opening of the session, "to sum up the evidence in the case, and bring it before the Council in its proper connection, to enable them how to act." He, with two other clergymen, was appointed by the Association to which I belonged, "to inquire into the facts in the case, and to state them to the Council when convened." But to my utter astonishment he appeared before the Council as my prosecutor, when I was totally unprepared to meet him in that capacity. The Rev. Mr. Riddel, chairman of the committee, had expressed the opinion to me, that there was no need of any lawyer on my part, as they were not coming in the character of prosecutors, but simply as reporters of facts *for and against* me. But the declaration of Dr. Beecher, above quoted, convinced me of my mistake. He did not allow me the common privilege of all persons accused, viz. *the presumption of innocence until guilt is proved*. He had made up his mind against me on the testimony of the principal witness, given to him by her in private, or by some one who had heard her story in private, when few, if any, were present, without cross-examination, and while he must have been ignorant of all testimony in my favor, and especially the testimony of the girl's mother and others in Edgecomb. Is Dr. B. infallible in his judgment? Did he never find occasion to give up an opinion which he once entertained beyond a doubt of its truth? Has he forgotten the time when he was firm in the belief that Providence had raised him up to give to the church and the world the true exposition of the Song

of Solomon, and that all preceding commentators had entirely misapprehended its meaning? But that exposition has not yet made its appearance, and it is presumed that he has long since renounced the opinion once so pertinaciously entertained. As he was mistaken *then*, so he may be *now*. Nay more, have I not proved his mistake? The above record of the doings of the church in East Hartford, if I remember correctly, was drawn up by deacon Pitkin. At any rate, it was voted and signed by his own hand; and he was not a man to vote or sign any thing which he did not believe.

A better friend than deacon Pitkin I had not in the world. When I made my annual visit in East Hartford, as I usually did for several of the first years of my ministry in Boston, his house was my home, and his hospitalities I received without stint or measure. He seldom or never came to the city without visiting me, and the last sermon he ever heard in Boston was from my lips. I now have a letter before me from him, dated March 16, 1829. The object of his letter is, to give me some account of the state of things in the church and parish there. He closes with these words:—"Mrs. Pitkin sends her love to Mrs. Fairchild and yourself, in which I cordially unite." Yet this is the man who had lost all confidence in me!

I will now quote a few paragraphs from the doings of the Council which dismissed me from the church in East Hartford.

"After a short recess, the Council resumed the consideration of the subject before them. The following question was then taken. Do the Council feel that they have just grounds to proceed to dissolve the pastoral relation subsisting between the Rev. Mr. Fairchild and the people of his charge? Although the Council regret that Mr. Fairchild should have attached so much weight, as he appears to have done, to the circumstances which led him to decide on the question of his own duty, yet the foregoing question was voted unanimously in the affirmative. Therefore,

Voted unanimously, That it is expedient that the pastoral relation of the Rev. Joy H. Fairchild to the Church and Society in this place be now dissolved, and the same is hereby dissolved.

The Rev. Mr. Fairchild being thus released from the pastoral charge of this people, this Ecclesiastical Council do cheerfully recommend him to the churches of our Lord wherever Divine Providence may direct his way, as a worthy minister of Christ Jesus. Having labored in the work of the Gospel ministry in this place, during a period of eleven years, it has pleased the God of all grace to accompany his labors, from time to time, with a divine blessing, and to grant his people two precious seasons of revival, hopefully calling many immortal souls into the fold of Christ. Endowed with rich ministerial gifts, the Council entertain a hope that he may continue long a faithful laborer in the vineyard of his Lord, and be instrumental, by divine grace, of turning many to righteousness.

Passed in Council,

Attest,

East Hartford, August 28, 1827.

HENRY A. ROWLAND, Moderator.

THOMAS ROBBINS, Scribe."

Soon after my dismissal from the church in East Hartford, the venerable Dr. Perkins of West Hartford, who was the able and beloved Pastor of the Church there for about sixty years, put into my hands the following testimonial:—

"The Rev. Joy H. Fairchild, the bearer-hereof, is a minister of the gospel in regular and good standing. He was lately dismissed, as such, from his pastoral relation to the Church and congregation in East Hartford, where he was an esteemed and suc-

cessful, able and faithful laborer for eleven years. He is a man of science, and sound in the faith; in his manners agreeable, and in his preaching evangelical. His style is elegant, and his delivery is both pleasing and eloquent. Accordingly he is heartily recommended to the Churches, wherever God, in his wise Providence, may call him.

NATHAN PERKINS, Pastor of the third Ch. in Hartford."

Hartford, Ct. September 4, 1827.

The following testimonial was given me, signed by five clergymen who were members of the same Association with myself.

"The Rev. Joy H. Fairchild has resided in the vicinity of us, the subscribers, for more than eleven years, and has been associated with us in the labors and duties of the Gospel. We esteem him highly as a beloved brother, and a faithful and efficient laborer in the common service of our divine Master. During his ministry he has been studious and diligent, much devoted to his particular charge, usually at home, and while enjoying the esteem and attachment of his people, his profiting has been very visible to us, and to the people in the adjacent places. We consider him endowed with rich ministerial gifts. His labors have been crowned with a divine blessing. This is attested by two happy seasons of revival, and the addition of more than two hundred members to his Church during his ministry. Having been separated from his Church and Society, at his own request, made from a deliberate sense of duty, we part with him with much reluctance, as well as his affectionate people. We recommend him to the christian affection and brotherly esteem of our dear brethren in the vineyard of Christ Jesus, and to the approbation of the Churches of our Lord and Savior.

THOMAS ROBBINS,
HENRY A. ROWLAND,
ISAAC PORTER,
ALLEN McLEAN,
NOAH PORTER."

East Windsor, Ct. August 31, 1827.

The following paper was given me by the Rev. Dr. Sprague, now of Albany.

"It gives me pleasure to state, for the benefit of those who may not be acquainted with the Rev. Mr. Fairchild, that I consider him a gentleman of well cultivated mind and a deserving character, and that he holds a distinguished place among the preachers in this region. His pulpit talents are of a high order. He lately preached in my pulpit with uncommon acceptance, and I have heard from many other places a similar testimony in his favor. His ministry at East Hartford, I have been informed, has been greatly blessed of God.

WILLIAM B. SPRAGUE."

West Springfield, October 2, 1827.

The following is the testimonial of Rev. Dr. Hawes, of Hartford.

"As the Rev. Joy H. Fairchild is about to remove from this, to seek some other field of labor, it is with pleasure that I give him this testimonial of affection and respect, and a cordial recommendation to the fellowship and kind offices of ministers and christians wherever, in the providence of God, his lot may be cast. In connection with the people of his late charge, he, for several years, proved himself an able and successful minister of Christ; and while a grateful remembrance is cherished of his exertions to promote the interests of religion in this portion of the church, he goes from us with fervent prayers that the blessing of God may attend him, and that, in due time, he may be called to renew, in stated labors, his services for the advancement of that cause to which he has devoted his life.

JOEL HAWES,

Pastor of the First Church of Christ in Hartford."

Hartford, September 10, 1827.

I beg leave to add one more testimonial. It was given by the Rev. Samuel Spring, who, at the time of my dismissal, was Pastor of the

North Church in Hartford, but is now settled in East Hartford, among the people of my former charge.

"Hartford, September 13, 1827.

"The Rev. Joy H. Fairchild, the bearer of this letter, was recently dismissed from his pastoral charge in East Hartford, by an Ecclesiastical Council of which I was a member. I had previously been informed that Mr. Fairchild was in estimation among his brethren in the ministry and the Churches in this vicinity for talent, industry and fidelity in his work. The investigation of the difficulties between him and his people has had no other tendency than to confirm, in these respects, the good opinion of those to whom he was best known; and I cheerfully give him this testimonial of my own esteem, and my assured belief that he possesses more than common qualifications to edify the Church of God, and to become useful to the world. As a preacher he is popular, and as a pastor I believe he has a testimony in the consciences of the good and bad among his former people, highly honorable to himself, and a happy pledge of his future success. Evangelical in his views, industrious in his habits, engaging in his manners, and devoted to his profession, I feel warranted to indulge the hope that he will prove a blessing to the community in which his lot may be cast, and an instrument of turning many to righteousness.

SAMUEL SPRING, Pastor of North Church, Hartford."

"Having been a member of the dismissing Council, I hereby add my name, and express my concurrence in the sentiments expressed in the above letter of recommendation.

JOEL H. LINSLEY, Pastor of South Church, Hartford."

Dr. Linsley has since been settled over the Park Street Church in Boston, on which occasion, at his own request, I presented him the Right Hand of Fellowship. He is now President of the College at Marietta, Ohio.

Such are my testimonials, as to character, with which I commenced my labors in South Boston. As I wish to tell the whole truth, I will here state that during the second or third year of my ministry in East Hartford, a report was put in circulation, injurious to my character, originating with two male members of the Church, who were, at the time, under discipline for intemperance. But when the people knew the origin and the circumstances of the report, it was generally regarded by all unprejudiced and well-disposed persons, as libellous. Certain it is that the Church did not deem it of sufficient importance even to appoint a committee of inquiry. No church meeting was held on the subject. Not an individual ever preferred any charge against me before the church, or expressed a wish to do so. Nor was I ever dealt with privately for any delinquency whatever during my ministry of eleven years. And when I asked my dismissal, the idea that my moral character was suffering never entered my mind. Even the tongue of slander had not, for many years, to my knowledge, uttered a whisper against me. The cause of my asking a dismissal was totally disconnected from every thing of this nature, as many now living in East Hartford can testify. I would refer especially to the two senior deacons there, viz. Eliab Pratt and John Judson, who well knew at the time all the circumstances which induced me to seek a removal from that place. I had no secrets there entrusted to any man in relation to the cause of my asking a dismissal, and if I had he has my full permission to disclose them to the world.

I was installed over the church in South Boston on the 22d day of No-

vember, 1827. Soon after this, Jeremy Drake, then a messenger (if I remember correctly) in the Washington Bank, was appointed Deacon.—When the Franklin Bank went into operation, which was in 1828 or 9, Marcus Whiting was chosen cashier. Having connected himself with my church, he was soon elected to the office of deacon. In 1832 I had some intimations that my deacons were unfriendly to me, and especially deacon Whiting, who complained, as I was informed, because my preaching, as he thought, was pointed and personal, and because I did not plainly tell his children when I called at his house, that they were great sinners, and going directly to hell.* It was not long before I had positive proof of their dissatisfaction by their actions, and by their desire expressed to Mr. Hayward and others for a new minister. A knowledge of this fact gave me not a little anxiety. I felt as though the deacons of the church were especially bound to sustain the pastor and be the last to desert him, except for immoral conduct. Several interviews were had with deacon Whiting, to convince him that he was not acting a christian part, and to induce him not to use his influence against me. His promises were fair but unfulfilled. While things were in this state, early in March, 1833, I received a call from the First Presbyterian Church in Newburyport. This occurrence brought matters at once to a crisis. The brethren of the church immediately held a meeting to consult as to what action they should take in reference to my call, and what measures, if any, they should adopt to induce me to decline it. Every brother, as I was informed, was requested freely to declare his opinions and wishes. The result was that all expressed a strong desire that I should continue among them, except the deacons. They preferred my leaving. Papers were then circulated among the male and female members of the Church and congregation for the signatures of those who wished me to remain. All, I believe who had the opportunity signed those papers except the deacons. At a regular meeting of the Church held in the Vestry about this time, I sent in a communication, stating the fact that I had received a call, but was not then prepared to say what answer I should return; but added that unless certain difficulties then existing in the Church were removed, I should doubtless feel it my duty to accept the call. As it never has been my practice to make a breach wider by openly proclaiming the faults of my brethren, unless compelled by duty to do so, only a few of the Church knew of any existing difficulties. Accordingly a Committee was appointed to wait on me and request an explanation of my letter. I then made some statements with regard to deacon Whiting's treatment of me, and closed by saying that he must leave the Church or I should. When they returned and made their report, the deacon immediately arose and assured

* His children were very young at the time, and two of them just old enough to attend the Sabbath School. He complained that when I called at his house, I patted his children on their heads, took them on my knee, stroked their hair, reminded them that they had been dedicated to God in baptism, asked them about their attending the Sabbath School, told them to be good children and love the Savior, so that when they died they might go to heaven. This, the deacon thought, was well enough, as far as it went. But he wanted me to go farther—to be more plain and severe. These, I was told at the time, were his chief reasons for being dissatisfied with me.

the brethren that he would ask a dismissal. At a subsequent meeting, after making a suitable apology for what he had done, a letter of dismissal and recommendation to Pine Street Church was granted him. At this time he was Cashier of the Oriental Bank, and deacon Drake succeeded him in the Franklin Bank. Deacon Whiting's history in connection with the Oriental Bank, is too well known to the commercial community to require any comments from me. As these deacons, Whiting and Drake, were on terms of great intimacy, and sympathised with each other I was on the point of making it a condition of my remaining, that *both* of them should leave. But a mutual friend remarked to me that deacon Drake was greatly influenced by deacon Whiting, and would doubtless give me no trouble when that influence was withdrawn. On this account I consented to his remaining. Whether I acted wisely or not the sequel will show.

As I was out of health at the time, and as there were weighty reasons why I should go to Newburyport, more than two months passed away before I was prepared to return an answer to the call. In the mean time, deacon Drake then finding himself alone in his opposition, called to see me, and expressed his opinion that, all things considered, I had better remain. As he had, a short time previous, expressed his desire that I should leave, I asked him for his reasons. He assigned the very common one, better edification. It was then my impression that if I had preached *more* on the doctrines of the Gospel and against other denominations, and *less* on the duty of doing justly, and loving mercy, and having charity for those who differ from us, and governing the temper and tongue, the plea of better edification would not have been urged. I have however since been informed by a friend that what he had especially against me was that I was a proud man; and the evidence of my pride consisted in my wearing a frock coat, walking with a cane, and preaching in a gown and bands. At this interview he promised in the hearing of my wife, that if I remained, he would never give me any more trouble; that if he should in future become so dissatisfied with me from any cause as not to sit contentedly under my ministry, he would go quietly away, and use no influence to injure me, and make no attempt to prejudice any one against me. Though from that time there was no open hostility till August 1841, yet I could often see enough so to convince me that the feelings of his heart were unchanged. There was nothing kind and cordial in his intercourse with me; no expression of approbation at my unwearied efforts to promote the prosperity of the Church and congregation, and no gratitude apparently felt for my persevering and exhausting labors in erecting the new meeting house, and procuring the clock and the organ.

In 1836 deacon Josiah Vinton came to reside among us; and as he had sustained the office of deacon in other Churches, he was appointed to supply a vacancy in that office occasioned by the removal of deacon Gale. I had no difficulty with him till the summer of 1840. It was then proposed to alter the meeting house steps which projected so far into the public highway as to expose the Society to be prosecuted for a nuisance. This alteration was advocated by me with some zeal, while deacon V. was strenuously opposed to it. But in Parish meeting it was

voted with great unanimity, notwithstanding his opposition, to alter the steps. Being naturally irritable, unyielding, and self-opinioned, the above vote gave him offence. He immediately resigned his office as chairman of the Prudential Committee, and declined being a candidate for the office of Treasurer, lest, as he said, he should come into collision with the pastor. As not one unkind word had ever passed between me and the former Treasurer, I was surprised that he should have assigned such a reason. A few days after this, I was standing on the steps of the meeting-house with deacon Vinton, Mr. Hayward, Mr. Dunham, and Mr. Howe, consulting as to the manner in which the proposed alteration should be made. The deacon then and there addressed me in such unfeeling terms, and manifested such a spirit and temper, and cast such censure on me for what I had done, that Mr. Dunham, (who was then friendly to me,) said as soon as the deacon had gone, "How unkind it is for the old man to talk to you in such a manner, considering what you have done for the Society! I had fairly to bite my lips to keep from blowing him sky high for his abuse of you." I went into my house with a heavy heart. I felt grieved that I should be so censured by my deacon who did not come among us till the meeting house was nearly finished, who had taken no stock in it, and who refused to buy a pew on the day of the public sale, though he was, at the time of which I speak, the owner of one of the best pews in the house, which cost originally 275 dollars, but which he had purchased for 100 dollars of Mr. Robert Living, the former owner, who had removed to New York. From that day forward I heartily wished myself disconnected from the deacons, and expressed a strong desire to my wife, that Providence would open some door by which I could get away from them without injuring the Church and Society. As I wished for peace I was cautious about speaking of these things to any one but Mrs. F.; and though she deeply sympathized with me then as now, yet as the people were generally so well united in me, she thought that it was not my duty to break away from them on account of the unkind feelings of my deacons.

I now come to quite an eventful period in my history. And as I shall have frequent occasion to refer to a Board of Referees for proof of what I am going to say, I must anticipate a little, and state, for the information of the public, that on the 8th day of May, 1844, a meeting was held at South Boston, to investigate charges against my moral character, in which the deacons were especially concerned. By mutual consent the difficulties between us were referred to the examination and decision of three pastors and three laymen of sister Churches. Pastors—Rev. Messrs. Hubbard Winslow, Nehemiah Adams and William A. Stearns. Laymen—Deacons Nathaniel Dana, Daniel Noyes, and Col. Thomas M. Vinson. These gentlemen constituted what was called a Board of Referees.

I will now return to my narrative; and in order that the case may be fully understood, I must go back to the year 1834. In November of that year, a young lady by the name of Roxana Davis came to reside in my family as a boarder. She had been hopefull, converted under my ministry and had joined the Church at our communion in the month of May preceding. She was a female of unblemished character, and had the es-

teem and confidence of all the best people in the place who had any acquaintance with her. As my daughter had just gone from home to reside abroad, Mrs. F. and myself received Miss D. to supply the vacancy thus made in the family, and we have ever since regarded her very much in the light of a daughter. After residing with us about fifteen months, she was married to her present husband, Mr. Nahum Dunbar, a very worthy citizen of South Boston. They commenced house-keeping in the Spring of 1836, in a house which he purchased at a short distance from my own, where they still reside. Our families, as was most natural, were quite intimate, so much so, that in passing and repassing we stepped into each other's houses almost daily without ringing or knocking, and at either the front or side door as was most convenient. Being somewhat methodical and uniform in my habits of business, I was accustomed for years to attend to my worldly affairs soon after dinner. Most of the men with whom I had any secular transactions, whether shop-keepers, or painters, or carpenters, or laborers to saw my wood, work in my garden, &c., lived near or beyond Mr. D's. In going or returning I frequently called there without ceremony, just as though it were the home of my daughter or sister. Mr. D. too, had the reading of my papers, which if I were going past I would call and leave. This excited, in the first place, the envy probably, and then the jealousy of Mrs. Howe, living on the opposite side of the street, the wife of Mr. Cranston Howe, now of the Custom House. She stated to the Referees that she employed herself for three years in watching at the window to see when I went there, and as I was more likely to call about 2 o'clock, P. M., than any other hour, for the reason above mentioned, she fancied that I went there by a pre-concerted signal, and for an unworthy object. She thought that there was something in the position of the window blinds or curtains which was an invitation for me to call. At length she persuaded her husband to watch too. In the early part of May 1841, Mrs. F. went a journey to visit her friends at the South, and returned the latter part of July. During her absence I took my meals at Mr. Dunbar's, but studied and lodged at home. While there, I promised Mrs. D. that when my plums were ripe she should have some of them. Accordingly about the middle of August, the plums being ripe, I took a few of them from the tree and put them on my study table. As I was going to the store adjoining Mr. D's house to purchase some tape by which to fasten my grape vine upon the trellis, and thinking when I went out that I had put the plums into my pocket, I called to leave them before I went into the store. As soon as I entered the door I told Mrs. D. that I had fulfilled my promise in bring her the plums, and was going to take them out of my pocket, lest I should injure them by sitting down, when I discovered that I had not taken them from my table. I mentioned the fact to her, and told her that I was going into the store for an article, but would certainly bring them in that afternoon. I passed immediately into the store, purchased my tape, and in a short time returned to Mrs. D's with the plums. The watchers, finding that I had been there twice in one afternoon, thought it high time that something should be done. Accordingly, Mr. Howe, instead of coming to me for an explanation, (if any explanation was necessary,) communicates

the mater privately and confidentially to deacon Vinton. And then the *deacon* goes to watching, In a few days deacon Drake is let into the secret and *he* too goes to watching. In the meantime Mr. Howe says not one word to me, neither does he consult my friends, but goes to the deacons who, as he well knew, had long been unfriendly to me. This was in August 1841. On the 27th day of that month, (and all this came out before the Referees) as I was going to pay a bill to Mr. Conley, my carpenter, about 2 o'clock P. M., which I had promised on the proceeding evening to pay that day, and as the *Missionary Herald* had just arrived, I took Mr. D's number, who was a subscriber, and called to leave it at his house. I tarried fifteen or twenty minutes, and then passed on some 80 or 100 rods beyond to pay the bill. I saw nothing and thought nothing of deacon Vinton till I was putting the money into Mr. C's hand. At that moment he entered the door of the Vestry of the Methodist meeting house where Mr. C. was, with myself and another man whose name I do not remember. I saluted the deacon very pleasantly, and said something about the importance of paying our debts as we went along; when he replied that I owed him a debt or he owed me one; I do not recollect which. This he said in such a tone of voice and with such an expression of countenance, (though possibly not observed by Mr. C. who was then occupied with another gentleman,) that I took him by the arm and walked away with him, lest he should say something to expose his fiery temper, (for he was very combustible) in the presence of those two gentlemen. I asked him to explain himself about the debt. He immediately replied in a very angry manner, "You are a bad man. We have lost all confidence in you," with some other similar expressions. I asked him what he meant! He replied, "You know what I mean, for it is something which has taken place within half an hour." I told him that it was not half an hour since I left my house, and that I had called only on one family, and spoken to but one individual. He then gave me to understand that I had been to Mrs. D's for a bad purpose, that I had been watched for a long time, and that I went there by a signal. Some of my friends to whom I have related this interview, have said that it would have been well if I had had the organ of combattiveness pretty strongly developed. But whether it would have been well or not, certain it is that my head has no such bump, as all will admit before I get through my story.

After telling the deacon that he had better be cautious as to what he said, I asked him who were associated with him in this matter? But he refused to name them. He assured me, however, that they did not wish to make any public attack on my character, and that they would doubtless be willing to keep silent, if I would resign my office as pastor of that church. On our return we passed Mr. D's house which fronts on B. street and ends on Broadway. As we were passing the house he pointed up to the window blind over the front door, one half of which was open three or four inches, and said "that is the signal." I replied that I knew nothing of it, and that I never went there by any signal; and when I ascended the steps of my own house, some 20 or 30 rods off, I looked at the blinds, and could not discover from that position that they were open at all. They had every appearance of being entirely closed.

Perhaps I had better state here that when this matter was investigated before the Referees, it appeared in evidence that the room over the front door was occupied at that time by the girl who lived with Mrs. D.; that she worked for Mrs. D. in the morning, and attended school in the afternoon; that when she dressed herself for school just before two o'clock, she usually opened one half of the blind a little ways for the admission of light with the design of closing it before she left the room, which she generally did, but sometimes forgot to do it; that when she returned from school and saw it open, she would hasten up stairs to close it, lest Mrs. D. should discover it, and reprove her for her forgetfulness, as she had often charged her not to leave it open.* The watchers noticed the blind. They also noticed that the girl left home about that time, and not knowing that she attended school, they *inferred* that she was sent away for my accommodation. This circumstance, in the minds of the Referees, weighed not a feather, and just so it was with regard to the curtains when that matter was investigated.

This attack upon me by deacon Vinton was on Friday. I requested him to keep the matter private, and to invite the persons connected with him in this affair, to an interview with me. To this he consented. On Saturday morning he informed me that they would see me on Monday at 5 o'clock, but not sooner, in his counting room. He, however, gave no intimation who they were. This state of ignorance and suspense to a sensitive mind, can be more easily imagined than described. At length the hour arrived. I went to the place appointed, and there found deacon Drake and Mr. Cranston Howe with deacon Vinton. Soon after the subject was introduced, I affirmed my innocence, and told them that I was willing to take my oath upon the bible that I never had any improper connexion with Mrs. D., and never went there by any signal. I further assured them that Mrs. D. was profoundly ignorant of what had taken place; that I had not seen her alone one moment since the deacons' attack upon me, and had had no communication with her whatever upon the subject; that, knowing her innocence, and her excitable temperament, I would not on any consideration, have her made acquainted with it, especially then, as the time of her confinement was near, which event occurred just two weeks from the day of the deacons' attack; that I had never allowed myself to converse with her on such topics, and that, to disclose the matter to her then, might prove fatal to herself and her expected child. And I will here remark that she never did know any thing about it, or have the least suspicion of it, to my knowledge, (and this she solemnly affirmed in the presence of the Referees) till she learnt it more than two years after, as coming from the deacons themselves, or from some one entrusted with their secrets. And lest I should omit to mention

* The female who thus testified, had, on the very Sabbath preceding, made a public profession of religion, under the authority and by the consent of the deacons. They could not impeach this witness, she having been recently converted and received into the fold of the Good Shepherd. And truly her testimony was wholly unimpeachable; for she had always sustained an excellent character, though Mr. Howe tried hard to make it appear that she did not occupy that room at the time, but lodged up in the attic, just as if he knew better where the girl slept than she did herself!

it in its proper place, I will here state that on a subsequent occasion, deacon Drake accused me of falsehood for asserting that Mrs. D. was totally unacquainted with the matter, and said he had not a doubt that she knew all about it before the interview at deacon V's counting-room. This conversation took place after my return from my journey. I was talking with him about the signals, and how I had noticed their appearance during several months after the matter was made known to me by deacon Vinton. The truth is, I had never seen them before; for I did not deem the position of my neighbors' blinds or curtains any concern of mine. I left them to manage such things in their own way, and according to their own taste and convenience. But as the deacons had set me the example, I concluded to watch too. I did so till the first of April. And what was the result? Why, the signals appeared more than forty times, and four times during the two weeks immediately preceding her confinement; for I marked them down in my almanac. But never did I go to the house when they appeared. I was stating this fact to deacon Drake, when he replied that I had informed Mrs. D. of the matter before our first interview in deacon Vinton's counting room; that I had told her how to manage; and that the signals continued to appear afterwards merely as a trick to delude and blind them. To convince him of his error, I asked him what would have been the probable effect on her mind and health, if she had been informed of it in her delicate situation at the time. And as she was uncommonly well during those two weeks, and was down stairs sooner than common after her confinement, I told him that the natural inference was that she knew nothing about it. He replied, "She is so hardened in sin, that it would not affect her at all." This he said of a female member of the church in high standing, who had never been admonished for any delinquency, real or imaginary, and whose character was as fair, for aught I know to the contrary, as that of his own wife.

But to return from this digression to deacon V.'s counting-room. As the deacons and Mr. Howe had already judged and condemned me, without having heard one word from my lips in my own defence; as I believed at the time that it was a plot on their part to get rid of a pastor whom they disliked; as not one of them had been near me in private, kindly to admonish me for what they supposed to be my fault, agreeably to the direction of Christ, "If thy brother trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone;" and as, for these reasons, I was unalterably fixed in my determination to leave the church, I thought it best to enter into some arrangement for that purpose, though expressing at the same time my perfect willingness to answer any questions they might propose, and make any explanations which it was in my power to make. Accordingly questions were asked, and explanations given. But explanations to men who had prejudged the case, (and especially to enemies) were utterly vain. They seemed determined to have things in their own way, and to make me out guilty because they wished me so. I had, however assured them, at the very commencement of the interview, that I should leave; that I would not stay in connection with men who had treated me so, for their weight in gold; that nothing would induce me to remain except to defend my character, which was of more value to me

than gold ; that I wished to avoid all controversy, and every thing which might mar the harmony of the church and congregation to whose prosperity I had devoted so much labor, and whose disunion and decline could give me nothing but pain. I closed by reiterating the declaration that if they made any public attack upon my character, I would stay and defend myself if it cost me my life. They disclaimed all desire or intention of injuring my character, and entered into a solemn agreement not to do so, in case I would leave before the first of June. We then separated.

Within a few days after this Mr. Howe, in an interview with me, said that he hoped I would not act hastily ; that they might have received wrong impressions ; — that if I were innocent, I ought not to leave, and that if any left, it belonged to those who were dissatisfied, rather than to me. I told him that I was glad to hear him express such views, but they made no difference with regard to my leaving, for leave I should at all events, unless it became necessary to remain to defend my character.— Similar views were also expressed to me soon after by deacon Vinton. But deacon Drake made no such expressions.

After reflecting for some weeks on the subject, I concluded to release them from all obligations of secrecy to me, on the ground that it might, at some future day, operate to my injury. And I released them accordingly, telling them that they were at liberty to make any attack upon me, if they would do it soon, or at least before I left the church, as I could better defend myself while I was pastor, than after my dismissal. I told them that if they made known their suspicions at all, they ought to do it while I was there, as it would be ungenerous first to disarm a man, and then attack him. They seemed to feel the propriety of this, and I expected them to act accordingly.

When the above arrangement was made, it was my understanding with them that I should avail myself of the first vacancy which might occur in some church in which it might be mutually agreeable for me to labor as their pastor ; and that if such a vacancy should occur at any time, no matter how soon, I should improve it. But my health, having been uncommonly feeble during the preceding summer, was so much impaired within a month or two after this arrangement was made, that I was totally unfit to be a candidate for settlement over any church, not being able to perform more than half my usual services as a pastor. During the month of December, I was not able to preach at all for three successive Sabbaths. Thus I was compelled to look after my health instead of a new church. There was a general prostration of strength, an inability to speak in public without great effort and consequent exhaustion ; a want of appetite and sleep, and an apparent breaking down of my constitution. How much of this prostration and feebleness might have been attributed to the ill treatment of my enemies, I will leave others to decide. Deacon Vinton admitted before the Referees that I was sick, but thought that my sickness was owing to my remorse of conscience. He seemed not to be aware that a sensitive man, like myself, could be at all affected in his health by a vile aspersion upon his character.

Such being the state of my health during the winter, I began to make arrangements early in the spring to take a long journey, designing to leave

as soon as the weather had become sufficiently mild to permit me to travel with comfort and ease. My first calculation was to go to Europe, and to spend in travelling on that continent one whole year. But finding it somewhat difficult to obtain the necessary funds, and by the advice of friends of more experience than myself, I gave up the project the latter part of April, and concluded to travel first in my own country, and afterwards cross the Atlantic if it should be judged expedient.

This brings me to that period in my history when I paid the money to Rhoda Davidson. I had not seen her, nor heard a word from her for nearly five months. But on the 22d day of April, 1842, while I was in a state of great feebleness, with the rod of the deacons over my head, she came upon me in the manner described in my defence* before the Council. What could I do? How could I refuse to pay the money when placed in such a position! My imagination first led me to suppose that she might have been instigated to do it by my enemies, and that my only way of safety was to close her lips by yielding to her demands. Had she put her threat into execution as she said she would, (and I believed her) unless I paid her money, what would have been the consequence? The deacons would have laid hold upon it with eagerness, and regarded it as confirmation strong, that I was guilty of the crime of which they had accused me. I should thus, as I then viewed the matter, not only have lost my own character, but brought disgrace upon a virtuous woman, (Mrs. D.) and her innocent husband, who had always treated me kindly, and who had received, in return, nothing but kindness from me. To give my enemies an opportunity to inflict such a wound on them, through me, was what I could not do, if the payment of money would prevent it.—The money was paid. If I did wrong, how few, in my circumstances, would have done right? I know that my faith is weak, and my confidence in God not what it should be; and I lament it. But still it is much easier to sit calmly in our chair, and talk of trusting in an over-ruling Providence, than it is to put that trust into execution in a time of sudden and unexpected calamity. I have yet to learn that the peaceful traveller is to be blamed for his want of confidence in God, who gives up his purse rather than his life to the highwayman. To those who are disposed to censure me in this matter, I will only say, "Let him that is without sin cast the first stone."

On the first Sabbath in May, 1842, I preached, though in great feebleness, my last sermon at the communion, and admitted 34 into the church, 15 of whom I baptized. That service closed my labors in the Phillips

*The paper which I read to the Council was called, in the public prints 'my defence.' But this is a misnomer altogether. It did not receive that name from me. It was a simple statement of facts with regard to my acquaintance with Rhoda Davidson. It was prepared ten days before the meeting of the Council. Of course I could not make a defence against testimony till I had heard it. If the public regarded that paper as properly my defence, they must have pronounced it a very weak affair indeed. Nothing of this kind was intended by me when I wrote it. I expected to have made my defence when the evidence was all in; but as it was then proposed to submit the case without argument on either side, I yielded the point, and thus lost the opportunity of making any defence at all.

Church. I was then prepared to ask a dismissal, provided the deacons and Mr. Howe had not made known their suspicions which I gave them liberty to do some months before if they saw fit ; for had they done so, I was determined not to resign my office, but to go my journey and defend myself on my return, or to die abroad, if God so willed it, without any public defence. At this time it was quite problematical whether I should resign or not. True, it was in my heart to resign, and I had so intimated to some confidential friends ; but there was a contingency connected with it, which might or might not prevent me from such an act. That contingency was the *revealing or not revealing the matter by my watchers*, which could not have been known by me for *certainty* till the time of my contemplated resignation had arrived. After preaching my last sermon I went first to Mr. Howe and asked him if he had spoken of the matter to any one. He assured me that he had not. I then requested him to renew his promise that he never would speak of it. That promise he readily made. I then went to deacon Vinton, and had a similar interview with him, and received a similar promise ; and the same with deacon Drake.

The way being thus prepared for me to resign, the following letter was read from the pulpit by the Rev. Mr. Smith, at the close of the afternoon service, May 15, 1842.

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE PHILLIPS CHURCH AND SOCIETY.

BELoved BRETHREN AND FRIENDS :—

You are aware that my health has been such since last October, as to unfit me, in a great measure, for discharging my duties as your pastor and teacher. By the advice of my physician I am about to journey for several months, as the most probable means of regaining my former strength and ability to preach the gospel, and to perform the other duties pertaining to the christian ministry. After mature deliberation, and much prayer to God for his guidance and counsel, I have come to the conclusion that it is my duty to resign my pastoral office, and seek a dissolution of the connection by which we have been united together, as minister and people, for more than fourteen years. Having come to this conclusion, I hereby request that my pastoral relation to you may be dissolved as soon as it can be done legally, and in accordance with ecclesiastical usage in like cases. Such is my constitutional temperament, that I can indulge very little hope of a restoration to health so long as I feel the weight of a pastor's responsibility resting upon me. And it will be wholly beyond my power to throw off this responsibility so long as I remain your pastor. Let me travel in whatever country I may, and at whatever distance from home, still it will be utterly impossible to get rid of the cares, anxieties and responsibilities peculiar to my office. And unless my mind can be perfectly at ease in this matter, I feel as though journeying would do me but little good. Indeed, I fear that it would profit me nothing. The consequence would probably be, that, after spending months in the fruitless pursuit of health, I should be compelled to make the same request which I now make, and under circumstances not so favorable to your continued peace and prosperity as exist at the present time. If I am not deceived, the first wish of my heart, so far as you are concerned, is, that you may be a united and prosperous people. But you have already suffered in some degree, from the fact that you have had for several months, so little of a pastor's care and watch ; and to have that care and watch wholly cease for several months to come, must operate greatly to your embarrassment and injury. Situated as you are, I feel as though a stated pastor among you was indispensable to your well-being ; and feeling this, I should consider myself quite culpable if I did not declare it to you, and urge you to unite, as speedily as possible, in choosing someone to succeed me, who will watch over you with a pastor's care, and devote his time, talents and prayers to promote union among you, and advance your spiritual growth and prosperity.

If any of you should ask whether the want of health is my only reason for requesting a dismission, I would reply that although a hundred other reasons might actually exist in my mind, yet ill-health alone would compel me to make the request contained in this communication; a request which I now urge you to grant with an importunity which cannot be denied. Indeed, if you are my friends, I am sure that there will be no denial. A unanimous vote granting my request, I should regard as evidence of far greater friendship for me than the unanimous invitation which was given me to become your pastor. And if you, who are most attached to me, and most affectionate as parishioners, wish to give me one more proof of your friendship, you will do it by aiding me in obtaining the object which I now have in view. However grateful I may be for your past acts of kindness, I should feel that a readiness to grant my present request would be an act of kindness outweighing all others, and for which you shall receive my warmest thanks as long as I live. If you desire the restoration of my health, and my continuance in the ministry of Christ, you will best prove your desire by giving me your ready co-operation in bringing about the dissolution of our present connection. And I do hope and entreat that none of you will come to me for the purpose of urging reasons why I should withdraw my request, even for a few months; for though I should appreciate highly your motives, and thank you kindly for your good wishes, yet my mind is fixed—UNALTERABLY fixed, that it is my duty to leave you; a duty which I owe to myself and you; and above all, to the Great Head of the Church. If he has any more work for me to do in his vineyard, sure I am it is not to be done here. It may be that He, in his infinite wisdom, has determined that my labors, as a pastor, shall wholly cease. If so, I hope for grace to say, "Thy will be done." This is a matter which I desire submissively to leave with him. And although my only means of subsistence is my salary, which now ceases, yet I feel an assurance that the same kind Providence who has hitherto supplied my wants, and who feeds the young ravens, will not permit me or mine to suffer through hunger or cold or nakedness. I doubt not that he will provide kind friends to take care of me, and to whom he will say in the last day, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

I hope there will be no complaining of that dispensation of Providence which seems to require our separation. And sure I am that there will be no complaint if we will only look back to the time when we first came together, and trace the dealings of God toward us from that period to the present day. You were then a feeble band. The church consisted of only thirty-seven members, and such had been your trials and discouragements, that it was quite doubtful, for some months, whether you would disband, and give up the ground to be occupied by another denomination, or make one further effort to gain strength sufficient to retain your existence as a distinct church and society. Just at this interesting crisis a kind Providence directed my steps hither, and the consequence was, that a united and pressing invitation was given me to become your pastor. By the advice and urgent request of the late Dr. Wisner, then pastor of the Old South Church, your invitation was accepted; not because this was the most inviting field of labor that presented itself to my notice, nor because I was in pursuit of ease, worldly honor or interest; but because it was deeply impressed on my mind that duty to Christ required me to come and labor among you, hoping under God, that I might be the means of saving you, as a church, from utter extinction. At that time, neither you nor I had much reason to expect that our connection would continue for more than three years. But it has continued for fourteen years and a half. And now behold what great things the Lord hath done for us. Since the time of my installation, we have admitted into membership in this church 356; of this number 251 still remain connected with us, and the congregation has increased in about the same proportion. Instead, therefore, of complaining that God in his Providence seems now to require our separation, we ought to thank and praise him that our connection has been continued so long. In this day of fickleness and change, when so many churches are divided, and when ministers are so frequently dismissed, it is a matter of devout gratitude to God that we have lived thus long together with so much harmony and prosperity.

I not only came here first from a conviction of duty, as I just now intimated, but the same conviction of duty has prevailed on me to remain till the present time. Although it did seem for a while that I ought to accept the call which was given me in 1833, by the First Church in Newburyport, yet after long reflection and much counsel, I became fully satisfied that duty required me to return to that call a negative answer. But now the scene is changed, and the same conviction of duty which brought me here at first, and has continued me here unto this day, now declares in a voice which I cannot misunderstand, that I must leave you. Nine years ago it was my design and desire to have lived and died among you, and to have my dust mingled with yours. But God seems now to say that it must not be so. And let us cheerfully submit to his holy will,

and acknowledge that he does all things well. Whether I shall ever be able to preach again is known only to God. But I shall never cease to take a deep interest in your welfare. I shall rejoice if you prosper, and grieve if you decline. I have no feelings of enmity toward one of you; but I wish you all well in time and in eternity. I have endeavored to treat you kindly and seek your good; and wherein I have failed, I crave your forgiveness. My heart's desire and prayer to God is, that you may suffer no detriment in consequence of my leaving you, but rather that you may thereby be profited in things spiritual and in things temporal. But no such good result can be expected without much prayer, watchfulness and forbearance on your part. You must love one another with pure hearts fervently, and strive to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. By so doing you cannot fail to be a prosperous, useful and happy church.—But if a spirit of discord, alienation and strife enter in among you, then there will follow division, confusion, and every evil work. May God in mercy prevent this! May he unite your hearts in love, that you may long know by experience the blessedness of those who dwell together in unity.

Finally, dear brethren and friends, farewell! Be perfect. Be of good comfort. Be of one mind. Live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you.

Your affectionate Pastor,

J. H. FAIRCHILD.

Boston, May, 15, 1842.

The day after the above letter was read, a parish meeting was held in the Vestry, to act on that communication. The following is a copy of their doings.

At a regular meeting of the "Phillips Church Society," in Boston, held May 16th, 1842, the following resolves were passed by a UNANIMOUS VOTE.

Whereas the Rev. J. H. Fairchild has felt it his duty, in consequence of ill health, to request a dismission from his pastoral relation to the Phillips Church Society:—

RESOLVED, That while we deeply regret the state of his health, and feel grateful for his long continued exertions in promoting the temporal and spiritual interests of this Society, yet in view of all the circumstances, and of his urgent desire, this Society hereby grant his request.

RESOLVED, That Josiah Vinton and Charles J. F. Allen be a committee to unite with Mr. Fairchild, and such committee as the Church may appoint, in calling a mutual Council to dissolve his pastoral relation to this Church and Society, according to ecclesiastical usage.

A true copy of record,
Attest,

ALVAN SIMONDS, Clerk."

It will be remembered that in this meeting were present the deacons and Mr. Howe. The next morning I received a note from deacon Drake, in reply to one which I had sent him some few days preceding. The occasion of my note was this. When I called on him after preaching my last sermon, to request him to renew his promise, which he did, he said some hard things to me which deeply wounded my feelings; but as it was done in the Freeman's Bank, I had there no opportunity to make any reply. On my return to my study I wrote him a kind letter, expressing my regret that he should indulge such feelings towards me, and entreating him to let me know wherein I had injured him by word or deed, that I might make him all suitable reparation before I left, as we might not meet again till we met at the judgment seat of Christ. The morning after the above-named parish meeting was held, he replied to my letter, and said many unkind things, telling me that I was no christian; representing me as a hypocrite; stating that it was in his power to make me an object of scorn and contempt, or words to that effect; and closed by intimating that he should take an opportunity of stating to some friend

what he had accused me of, with all the circumstances of the case, that he might get his opinion whether he had treated me wrongfully or not. Thus it appears that as soon as my resignation was read and accepted, he threatens to violate his promise by commencing an attack upon my character. I immediately replied to his note, stating that if he had sent it before my letter of resignation was read, I should not have resigned my office. I thought it most unkind to disarm a man by fair promises, and then turn round and threaten to stab him. I have no copy of those letters, for reasons which will be stated in their proper place. Of course I quote from memory. But those letters were placed in the hands of the Referees or promised to be; and to them I refer for the truth of what I now state. Or if they did not read my correspondence with deacon Drake, when in secret session, the deacon has my full permission to publish my letters, in connection with his own, to the world.

The next day after the parish meeting, the Church met in the Vestry. The following is a copy of their doings.

"Whereas the Rev. Joy H. Fairchild, by a communication dated 15th inst., has resigned the office of Pastor of the Phillips Church and Society on account of ill-health, and expressed an earnest desire that his pastoral relation may be dissolved as soon as it may conveniently, in accordance with ecclesiastical usage. Therefore,

RESOLVED, That this Church comply with Rev. Mr. Fairchild's request, and that Alvan Simonds, Ebenezer Hayward and Thomas Blasland, be a committee to unite with the Pastor and committee of the Society in calling a Council to consummate the dismissal.

RESOLVED, That this Church deeply regret the enfeebled state of Mr. Fairchild's health, which causes his dismissal; sympathizing with him in his weakness and affliction, and hoping that by travel and a season of rest from the trials and labors of an arduous profession, he may be restored to health, and enabled to resume the duties of the ministry, wherever God in his Providence may call him.

RESOLVED, That this Church bears grateful testimony to the ABILITY, FAITHFULNESS and DISCRETION with which Mr. Fairchild has, for more than fourteen years, exercised the pastoral office among us, and that we regard him as sound in doctrine, and a successful advocate of divine truth.

The above resolutions were passed at a meeting of the Church held Tuesday evening, May 17th, 1842.

Attest,

ALBERT DRAKE, Church Clerk."

The deacons and Mr. Howe were present in this meeting, and as I was informed, deacon Drake presided, and opened the meeting with prayer. But they were silent, and uttered not one note of remonstrance against the proceedings, thus permitting the Church to recommend a clergyman as in good standing and worthy of confidence, whom they regarded as a hypocrite, and no christian! Will it be said that they were under an obligation not to remonstrate? True. But when was that obligation to cease its binding force? Not till the judgment of the great day. They had had full liberty to make their suspicions known for eight long months. But they omitted to do it. After that the time for disclosing was past. Their lips were to be forever sealed. But surely if they were *ever* to open their lips at all on the subject, that was the time when the Church were passing their votes of recommendation. It cannot be said, with any show of truth, as they now pretend, that I had violated the condition of silence by visiting my former parishioners, whether the family of Mr. Dunbar or any other. Nothing of the kind was said, or even intimated

in our agreement. I fulfilled my part of the contract to the very letter. How shamefully they have violated theirs, will be more clearly seen in the progress of my story.

The next day I commenced my journey ; and on the 2d day of June the Council assembled for my dismission. The following is a copy of their doings and result.

"The Rev. G. W. Blagden was chosen Moderator, and Rev. N. Adams, Scribe.—Prayer by the Moderator. The letter missive was read. A communication from Rev. Mr. Fairchild to the Phillips Church and Society; dated May 15th, 1842, was read, by which it appears that the state of Mr. Fairchild's health compels him to relinquish his pastoral charge, with a view to that entire freedom from care and anxiety, which, in his opinion, is essential to a hope of his recovery.

The doings of the Church and Society were presented and read. After inquiries of the committee by members of the Council with regard to Mr. Fairchild's health, the Council, being by themselves, it was

Voted, That, in the opinion of this Council, there are sufficient reasons in the Rev. Mr. Fairchild's statements with regard to his health, to justify the dissolution of his connection with his people, according to his request, and it is hereby dissolved.

The Council would express their entire confidence in the Christian and ministerial character of Rev. Mr. Fairchild. They have long known him and esteemed him as a devoted minister of Christ, whose labors have been much blessed ; and it gives them pleasure to recommend him as a faithful preacher and pastor to any people who may seek his labors, if he should be able to resume them.

Signed,

G. W. BLAGDEN, Moderator.

N. ADAMS, Scribe.

A true copy from the original,

ALVAN SIMONDS, Clerk of the Society.

Now mark : deacon Vinton, who was one of the Committee, was doubtless present at the meeting of the Council, of whom inquiries were made with regard to my health and other reasons, if any existed, why I had resigned my office. And yet he permits the Council to dismiss me with clean papers, recommending me in the highest terms, to any people who may seek my labors, if I should be able to resume them. And yet, at this very time, the deacon regarded me as a liar, and totally unworthy the confidence of the Christian community!

I returned from my journey on the 8th day of Sept. 1842, having travelled in various directions, nearly four thousand miles, with my health somewhat improved, but far from being confirmed. During my absence the Rev. Prince Hawes, my predecessor in the Phillips Church, once settled in Glastenbury near E. Hartford, visited S. Boston on business with Mr. Josiah Dunham ; and Mr. D. being greatly at enmity with me, let his feelings be known to Mr. Hawes ; and Mr. H. wishing to sell Mr. D. his houses, (which he did soon after,) doubtless found it for his advantage to join Mr. D. in casting reproach on me. Soon after Mr. Hawes returned, as I have reason to believe from certain circumstances which have come to my knowledge, he wrote a confidential letter to Mr. D. adverting to the East Hartford story, and referring to deacon Pitkin and Martin Stanley. In a letter written by deacon Vinton to Rev. Mr. Spring of E. Hartford, dated October 1842, to make inquiries about my moral character, the deacon mentions having seen a letter written by a clergyman formerly settled in Connecticut, but carefully withholds the name. I became well satisfied that that clergyman was Mr. Hawes ; and put the question

to deacon V. and he did not deny it. Poor business for Mr. H. ! I desire to say nothing about him. But for the information of those who may wish to inquire, I will refer them to the records of the Phillips Church, or to Messrs Artemas Simonds, Joseph Johnson, and to two gentlemen who were then members of Park Street Church. If I remember correctly their names are Hadly and Bates. Or if these gentlemen have no information to impart, then I would refer the inquirer to Mrs. Dunham ; for report says that *she* knew more about him than any body else. The second and third Sabbaths in Sept. after my return, I attended public worship in the Phillips Church with my family, as a hearer, and was cordially greeted by every body, except the deacons, the Dunhams, and the Howes. *They* all looked daggers. On the afternoon of the second Sabbath I was requested by a young couple, who had joined the church under my ministry, to baptize their little child. As I thought it would appear churlish in me to decline, I consented to do it. For this act deacon V. sent me a note the next day, virtually expelling me from the meeting house. And I did then leave the house with my family, and have not entered it since. This was the first intimation the deacon ever gave me that his object was to exclude me from the right of performing the functions of a minister, either in that Church or any other. But he thought he had me in his power, and might therefore treat me as he pleased, while I should not dare to remonstrate. I immediately wrote him a long, kind and faithful letter, giving my views of his conduct in full, from the beginning. It seemed to me an act of great cruelty and injustice, thus to banish me from a house which I had built for them, and to pay for which (including the organ, clock and land.) I had begged *six thousand and five hundred dollars*, not one cent of which was owned by me. It was all in possession of the Church and Society.

My letter to deacon V. gave him great offence. He soon sought an interview with me, and gave me distinctly to understand that he considered himself released from all obligation not to attack my character and that he was at liberty to make his suspicions known to the world or not just as he thought proper. To this course I strongly objected ; but without avail. Accordingly he soon writes the letter to Mr. Spring, above alluded to, in which he mentions his suspicions as to the cause of my leaving the Church in South Boston, and says he has been informed that I left East Hartford for a similar reason. He says, too, that rather than have his suspicions made known, I consented to resign my office ; but he carefully omits to state that he solemnly promised to keep his suspicions to himself. This he would not mention, because the very act of writing that letter would disclose his treachery in violating his promise. Mr. Spring returns an answer ; and one sentence in his letter, disconnected from what precedes and follows it, would make an unfavorable impression with regard to my character ; whereas the whole letter taken together, would do me no injury at all. Previous to the receipt of this letter from Mr. Spring, deacon Drake had told me in a private interview, that I left East Hartford because my character suffered there, and that they had written a letter (referring, I suppose, to deacon Vinton's) and that they should soon know all about it. Thus they were sending forth their mis-

siles of death to destroy a man who had done them no wrong, and whom they had promised never to injure. I then stated to deacon Drake verbally, and afterwards in writing, the true reason of my leaving East Hartford. But he said that my statement was false; that I was a bad man there; that I came to South Boston a bad man, and had been a bad man ever since, and that he would do all he could to get me out of the ministry.* All this was said and done, be it remembered, after he had promised to let me alone, and do nothing to injure me. I immediately copied the substance of what I had stated in my letter to the deacon as the cause of my leaving East Hartford, and in a few days went to Connecticut, read the paper to the surviving deacons of my former Church, to which they most readily gave their signatures as literally true.

TO DEACON DRAKE :—

Sir,—The cause of my asking a dismissal from East Hartford was this. There was a male member of that Church, who, at that time, possessed some character and influence,—a man of fiery temper and uncontrolled passions, who became strongly prejudiced against me, and took frequent opportunities, both in public and private, to abuse and insult me. He at length became so abusive that I felt my person to be in danger. Having made up my mind, in consequence of this treatment, to ask a dismissal, I invited my four deacons to come to my house on a certain evening in June, 1827. I then laid open my whole heart before them, and stated to them explicitly that my mind was unalterably fixed on asking a dismissal, and assured them that the sole reason which had brought me to such a determination was the ill-treatment of that individual. True, I might have stated some minor circumstances which had some influence on my mind, but these were of so little consequence that I cannot now call them to my remembrance. The deacons remonstrated, and said it must not be. But I persisted. They at length concluded to meet me again in two weeks; and in the mean time they would inquire what the feelings of the people were in relation to the subject. They came again at the appointed time, and assured me that they could not find more than six individuals who wished me to leave. They told me they did not believe that there was any parish in that region where the people were better united in their minister. But I assured them that I considered my person in danger, and therefore could neither be happy nor useful in remaining any longer the pastor of that Church. I obtained my dismissal, and the individual who caused it has since been excommunicated from the Church, neglects religious meetings, and, as I am informed, avows himself an infidel. Two out of the four deacons have since died, viz. Epaphras Ridwell and Samuel Pitkin. Two of them are now living. Their names are John Judson and Eliab Pratt. Better friends I have not in the world; and such were the two who are now dead. If you think that this statement is incredible, I doubt not but that the two living deacons will readily give their testimony to its truth.

We hereby certify that the above statement of the cause which induced Mr. Fairchild to ask a dismissal from the Church in East Hartford is strictly true. We further certify that the above account of the interviews and conversation between Mr. Fairchild and the deacons of the Church, is also true.

Signed,

ELIAB PRATT.
JOHN JUDSON.

East Hartford, Nov. 17, 1842.

After deacon Judson had signed the paper, he went out with me to my chaise; and as I was getting into it, he said, "there are hundreds in East Hartford who would sign that paper, for they know it to be true."

Some few weeks after I had returned to Boston with the above paper, signed by deacons Pratt and Judson, I learnt from deacon Drake that a

* He has recently stated the same, in substance, to Mrs. C., a worthy member of the Phillips Church.

letter had been received confirming all they had said about my character while in East Hartford. I immediately requested Mr. Howe to come to my house with the deacons, that I might know the contents of that letter. This, if I remember right, was about the middle of December, 1842, possibly a little later. They came into my study about 8 o'clock in the evening. I then requested the reading of the letter. Deacon Vinton objected; but took from his pocket-book a small slip of paper, on which he had copied a single extract from that letter, which he read. I requested that the whole letter might be read; but he refused. I then entreated him to name the writer. This he also declined. I then took from the drawer of my study table the testimonials of character which I brought with me from Connecticut, all of which had been in the hands of deacon Drake before my settlement in South Boston. I read them deliberately in their presence; and when I came to the paper just signed by deacons Pratt and Judson, putting the stamp of falsehood on what they had said about the cause of my leaving East Hartford, one of the deacons replied, that that paper did not amount to much; that it was written by myself, and that those gentlemen would of course sign it, because I requested them to do so! I immediately rose from seat, not a little excited, and thus addressed them:—"Gentlemen, those papers testify to the character which I brought with me from Connecticut. I claim the same character still; and now promise me before you leave this room that you will stop in your attempts to rob me of my good name, or else to-morrow morning, if God give me strength to do it, I will go out and proclaim your conduct to the world, assemble my friends around me; call on them for protection, and avow myself a candidate for re-settlement over the Phillips Church as soon as my health will permit. Now take your choice." They then, for the first time, exhibited symptoms of alarm. They promised that they would stop there, and do nothing more to my injury. I told them that was all I wanted; that I wished only to be let alone; that I had no desire to settle again in South Boston, and could not be prevailed on to do so, except to save my character from their unjust aspersions. At the close of that interview, Mr. Howe said, "Now the matter is forever settled. The covenant is signed, sealed and delivered, which is the end of all strife." "Very well," I replied, and we separated.

But that letter from East Hartford gave me not a little uneasiness. I wished to know the author. In a few days I met deacon Vinton, and again requested the name of the writer. But he still refused. He, however, said it was a gentleman who flourished a good deal in my letters of recommendation which I had read to him in my study. Recollecting he had previously said that the writer resided in East Hartford, and knowing that I had no letter of recommendation written by any gentleman in that place then living, except Mr. Spring, I immediately wrote him a letter of inquiry. He replied that deacon V. had written, and that he had answered him. He gave me a very satisfactory explanation as to what he had written; assured me that the letter, as a whole, could have done me no harm, and regretted that the deacon had not read to me the whole of it. I then wrote to Mr. Spring again, and requested him to write to deacon V., and tell him that he had misapprehended the meaning of his let-

ter, as I preferred not to have any further conversation with him on the subject. Instead of writing to the deacon Mr. Spring wrote again to me, and the following is that portion of his letter which relates to the subject of my request.

EAST HARTFORD, January 14, 1843.

MY DEAR BROTHER:—

Yours of the 2d inst. was received rather out of course of mail, but has been on hand a few days. I should have replied to it sooner, but have been immeasurably pressed with parochial duties.

I have written but once to your former deacon, and I prefer not to resume my correspondence with him, lest it should create a draft on my time, patience and sensibilities, which I could ill afford to answer. I am the more confirmed in this apprehension after noticing the opinion you have formed of him in an acquaintance of years. With such a man I would not desire to get into a quarrel, and to avoid it, I would have as little to do with him as possible.* When I wrote him I did it ignorantly and in misapprehension. My mistake I have endeavored to correct as far as respects yourself, and I now give you full authority to correct any he may possibly have formed from my letter, though a fair construction of the whole of it will not allow him to be in error respecting my opinion. I authorise you, then, to say to him from me, (using this or my last letter to you, or both, or neither, as you please, for proof,) that no charge of a criminal nature was brought before the Council at the time of your dismission; nor was a whisper uttered derogatory to your character as a christian minister; nor did a thought, so far as I know, even enter the mind of one of them that would implicate your purity or morality in any respect. Further, I authorize you to say that while reports unfavorable to you have since been circulated among this people, I have reason to believe they ORIGINATED WITH YOUR PERSONAL ENEMIES, AND I HAVE NOT A DOUBT THEY ARE MALICIOUS AND FALSE. They are not believed by nine-tenths of the people, and the cordiality and respect with which they treat you when you occasionally visit them, is evidence enough of the kind of estimation in which the mass of the people still hold you.

This I think, my dear brother, will correct any misapprehension which my letter may possibly have occasioned; and there is one reason why it should be in your possession rather than in his. You can use it when and how you please. He might not be disposed to use it at ALL. Men are usually not prompt to correct their own mistakes: If this does not answer the purpose, I may think it my duty to be more explicit, and to resume a correspondence with him. I should do it with no little reluctance.

Yours in haste and affectionately,

S. SPRING.

This letter was read in the presence of deacon Vinton before the Referees. And yet I have been told that he has since shown that same extract to many individuals, to my injury. He was present at the session of the Council in Exeter, and exhibited that extract, as I have been in-

* When this paragraph was read before the Referees, the deacon's excitement was beyond description. He produced a letter from me (which I wish he would publish,) in which I assured him that I had no desire to injure his character; that I had said nothing to his prejudice; that I should act, as I had done from the beginning, solely on the defensive; and that if a stranger were to make inquiries of me concerning him, I should say all the good of him that I could, and avoid the evil. Here he seemed to triumph, because, as he thought, he had caught me in a falsehood. The truth is that my letter to deacon V. in which the above expressions are found, or similar ones, (for I quote entirely from memory) was written before I knew that he was violating his promise, and shooting arrows at me in the dark. He must have thought me strangely constituted, if I would allow him to write such a slanderous letter to Mr. Spring, and I make no reply. If he had let me alone, as he promised to do, then there would have been no occasion for me to give my views of him to Mr. S., or to any one else. And I never should. I did it solely in self defence; and I said nothing but what I can prove to be true. And I believe that the public generally will need no other proof but the reading of this pamphlet.

formed to different persons, and to some members of the Council. He attempted to read it, or something like it, to Dr. Perry ; but from the severe, through merited lecture which he then received, it is presumed that this will be his last attempt on the doctor.

Soon after the above-named interview, in which "the covenant was signed, sealed and delivered," I preached for the first time in Exeter.— On the Monday following I was uncommonly feeble and exhausted. In the evening while leading in the devotions of the kind family where I lodged, I fell suddenly upon the floor, and was taken up, as they supposed, a corpse. After some four or six minutes, there were signs of returning life ; and on Wednesday I returned to Boston. While in the cars I reflected on the effects which my correspondence with the deacons would have had on my family and friends, if I had died at Exeter, and that correspondence had fallen into their hands. They were profoundly ignorant of the whole matter ; and the reading of those papers would, as I apprehended, have laid the foundation for strife and alienation between the deacons and my friends, which might have resulted most disastrously to families and the church. I said to myself, "As the covenant is signed, sealed and delivered, and the matter all ended, why should I preserve that correspondence ? It shall be destroyed." Accordingly I committed the packet to the flames. The first letter of Mr. Spring to me happened to be in that packet. But most providentially, his second letter was lying in another place, and escaped destruction. As the deacons had preserved our correspondence, it was all laid before the Referees.

About this time, if I remember correctly, Mr. Patton was ordained as my successor in South Boston. A short time before the ordination, I ascertained that the deacons and Mr. Howe, being on the committee to invite the Council, had determined to exclude my name from the letters missive. This act seemed to exceed in infamy all that had preceded it. This, I thought, was "signing and sealing the covenant" with a vengeance. Some of my friends interfered, and insisted that I should be invited. Finally the deacons said explicitly to a friend, that I should not be invited, because they had lost all confidence in me ; but they did not at that time tell him the reason of their want of confidence. That friend wished me to see them at deacon Drake's, where they were then assembled. I called as he requested, and told them it was a most unrighteous thing to treat me in this manner ; that it would be injurious to the church, to my friends, and even to themselves as well as to me ; that it would excite inquiry by the Council, and might lead to an investigation, and possibly defeat, for the present, the ordination itself. I told them that I had no desire to attend that service, and that if I did attend, I would on no account take any part in the performances. But to exclude my name, I assured them, would be a public declaration on their part, that I ought not to be recognized as a minister of the gospel ; and that, if I had dreamed of their treating me in such a manner, especially after their late "covenant, signed, sealed and delivered," I would have prevented their giving Mr. Patton a call some weeks before, by announcing myself a candidate for resettlement over that church. But they were fixed and unyielding. No gratitude for my past services in that place,—no sense of justice,—no re-

ard to their solemn promise,—no sympathy for a clergyman in feeble health, with a dependent family, whose character is to him much what capital is to the merchant in trade; no considerations of this kind could reach their hearts, or make them move from their purpose of excluding me from that Council, and thus exciting against me suspicion and distrust. Deacon Vinton, however, said that if any questions should be asked as to the cause of my name being omitted in the letters missive, he should reply that he considered me a member of the Phillips Church, and that he thought it improper for a member of the church to sit in Council to ordain a man over the same church of which he was a member. I told him that I was not a member,—that my membership ceased when my pastorship ceased,—and that so far as I was then a member of any particular church I stood connected with the church which I originally joined, and from which I had never been dismissed. But all this reasoning weighed nothing with those men. They said they had lost all confidence in me, and that was enough. I could hardly avoid exclaiming, “What! such men talk of a want of confidence! men who had suffered me to be dismissed from that church with clean papers as a good minister of Christ without a single whisper of objection! men who had violated their solemn covenant and promise! *such* men talk of a want of confidence! I could not but think of the character described by Solomon, “She eateth, and wipeth her mouth, and saith, I have done no wickedness!” I thought, too, of Paul’s declaration, “In perils, among false brethren.”

The council assembled. Much surprise was manifested at my absence; but as deacon Vinton took it upon himself to excuse the matter, on the ground that I was a member of the church, the services went forward, though not without much difficulty and delay; not, however, occasioned by my absence; and thankful I was that I was not there, lest it should have been attributed, by my enemies, to me.

On the first of March following, I removed, with my family, to Exeter. I had previously engaged to labor there for six months, as an experiment on my health. Things went on prosperously during those months, though some twenty members of the church soon removed by letter to the second church, on account of some previous difficulties with each other and their former pastor. But the vacancy thus occasioned was soon supplied by the accession to the church of more than forty members, by letter and profession, and by an increase of the number of worshippers on the Sabbath of about one third. When the six months had expired, my health was so far confirmed, that I consented to receive a call, and was installed on the 20th day of September, 1843. Being in Boston about the middle of that month, to request some of my brethren in the ministry to take part in the services of installation, I received a note while at Mr. Dunbar’s signed by the deacons and Mr. Howe, telling me that if I did not cease visiting Mr. D.’s house, (doubtless meaning South Boston) they had it in prayerful consideration whether it would not be their duty to state certain facts, in their possession, to the world. Deacon Drake sent his son with the note, who gave it to Mrs. Dunbar at the door, and she handed it to me, which I read without one word of comment, or a single intimation of its contents. To this note, soon after my installation, I replied in a

confidential letter to Mr. Howe, stating to him that the deacons had treated me in such an unkind and ungentlemanly manner, that I should hold no further correspondence with them, either written or verbal, unless compelled to do so by the most imperious necessity. I gave him distinctly to understand that I should not submit to their dictation; that I never visited any families in South Boston but such as were respectable as their own; that I always endeavored, wherever I went, to behave like a gentleman and a christian; and that so long as no complaint was made by those whom I visited, I thought it quite out of place in those to complain whom I have never injured, to whom I wished no harm, and upon whose hospitalities I should never obtrude myself.

Soon after this, a friend of mine, who had known me intimately for fifteen years, and a member of Phillips Church, came to Exeter, and informed me that deacon Vinton was saying things to my injury, giving strong intimations of something improper between myself and Mrs. D., and, at the same time, stating how much he had prayed for me. He mentioned that the deacon, not long since, was in the Provision Store of Mr. Henry Crafts; that Mr. C. asked him what he had against Mr. Fairchild; and that the deacon replied, "Ask me no questions, and I will tell you no lies;" but added, "I think that the clergy as a body are the most licentious class of men in the community." This friend remarked that the deacon had said the same to him in substance when conversing with him about me. Not thinking that the time had yet come for me to tell the story of my wrongs, (having acted uniformly on the defensive,) I assured this friend that he need not be troubled; that I had done nothing to give any just occasion for such insinuations; that when the proper period arrived, I should be ready to meet my accusers face to face, and then he should be informed of the whole matter. With this assurance he was satisfied, and returned.

Within a few weeks Mr. Dunbar began to hear what was reported; and having the most perfect confidence in me and his wife; having never seen or suspected the least impropriety between us, he and Mrs. D. concluded that it was their duty to leave a Church where they were thus slandered, and to make application for a letter of dismissal and recommendation to some other church. When Mr. D. was about making this application, he expressed a wish that if the deacons or any body else, had anything against the moral character of himself or wife, it might be made known to them. Accordingly it was arranged that an interview should take place between the deacons and Mr. D. at his house; but as Mrs. D. was then sick, it was agreed that the proposed interview should not take place till after her recovery. It did not therefore take place till the latter part of February or the first of March. The evening having been appointed, the deacon and Mr. Howe met at Mr. D.'s. They found themselves in quite an awkward predicament. How to introduce the subject they knew not. They remembered, (pity they had not remembered it before,) that they were under obligations of silence to me; and to talk about the matter in my absence, was not a little perplexing. They mentioned the difficulty of their position to Mr. D. who immediately proposed an adjournment, that I might be notified to be present. To this

they assented. But fearing lest some communication might pass between Mrs. D. and myself before the proposed interview could take place, (for I had assured the deacons from the beginning that Mrs. D. was as ignorant of the whole affair as a new born infant,) they wished to say something to her before my arrival. Accordingly one of them proposed to see Mrs. D. alone, as they wished to ask her a few questions. To this Mrs. D. very properly objected, and said, "Gentlemen, if you have any thing to say to me, say it in the presence of my husband; for if you converse with me in private, I shall tell him all you say to me as soon as you are gone." Deacon Vinton then said to Mrs. D., "Did not Mr. Fairchild visit you by a signal?" She replied, "Never; I know not what you mean." The deacon replied with much emphasis and an intimidating shake of his finger, "Ah! madam, you *do* know." After some remarks by Mr. Howe, Mrs. D. said, "I am perfectly willing, Mr. Howe, that you should inquire into my character of any one with whom I have associated; for I think it will stand quite as fair as your own, Sir, either before or since my marriage." To which Mr. H. replied, "O Mrs. Dunbar, no one ever doubted but that your character stood fair. We would trust you with any other man but Mr. Fairchild. He is so very artful, perhaps you were betrayed before you were aware." (If I am wrong in any part of this statement I hope the Referees will correct me.) Mrs. D. replied, "I know nothing of his art; for it has never been practised on me. He has always treated me with the greatest kindness and respect as my friend and pastor." This was said to her by Mr. Cranston Howe, who had lived in illicit connexion with the woman, now his wife, for how long a time before their marriage, is best known to themselves. Certain it is that some months before the proper time a child made its appearance, to the great astonishment and mortification of the family where they then boarded. Deacon Drake also remarked, "If I were convinced you had done wrong and were sorry for it, I would promise never to think of it again, no, not another half hour." To which Mrs. D. replied, "Would you have me confess a thing of which I am not guilty?" and was going to add: "for the sake of your sympathy, deacon Drake?" but being choked with emotion, she did not complete the sentence. Deacon Drake then replied, "O, if you have been betrayed, we could not expect you to acknowledge it." Thus it seems that what the deacon wanted was a confession, on the assurance that he would immediately forget and forgive the sin. If the crime he was charging upon her were true, she must have been as guilty as myself. And yet he would most readily forgive it all in her! Who does not see that the deacon's object was to have the fatal arrow strike, not *her*, but *me*, through her? The husband, hearing all this, was perfectly astounded, and the wife in tears. Not one suspicious thought had passed through his mind; and yet, hearing the grave deacons of a church talk in this manner, he fancied it *possible* that there might be some foundation for what they said. He is a timid man, and has no more of the organ of combattiveness than myself. When the above scene was described in the presence of the Referees, one of the gentlemen from Exeter who heard it, said to me, "It is well that I had not been the husband of that woman; for if I had, I am afraid that mur-

der would have been committed." And when these facts were stated to Cyrus Alger, Esq. of S. Boston, who well knew the moral purity of Mrs. D.'s character, I have been credibly informed, that he offered Mr. D. his purse to prosecute those men to the full extent of the law. But wishing for no litigation with any one, he has hitherto declined the offer. How much longer he will decline it, is a matter for him to decide. When it was stated to the Referees that Mrs. D. had been an inmate of my family for fifteen months before her marriage, the following question was proposed to Mr. D. : "Was not your wife virtuous when you married her?" To which he promptly replied, 'She was; and I have every reason to believe that she has been so ever since.'

And here my readers will excuse me for stating in reference to Mrs. Dunbar, that there is not a purer minded female in the church in South Boston, or in any other church. There was not a stain upon her character, either before or since her marriage. And in confirmation of this statement, I would refer to those families who are best acquainted with her, such as the Algernons, the Howards, the Brookses, and the Nickersons; and indeed, to any families there, always excepting Mr. Howe's, the deacons', and the Dunhams.' I do not include, in this remark, the elder son of Mr. Dunham. He, I am told, has never joined this crusade against innocence and virtue.

But the account of this affair is not yet ended. In a day or two after this strange scene at Mr. D.'s, he had an interview with deacon Drake in the Freeman's Bank. The deacon then, I am told, shed tears, pitied Mr. D., called him brother very affectionately, and told him how much he respected him. As Mr. D. had not then a clear insight into the matter, he asked the deacon's advice. And the deacon told him to try to make his wife confess, and asked him whether he could not live with her again, if she should confess; adding, that he thought he could live with his wife, if she had been betrayed, and would confess it.* All this came out before the Referees.

After this interview, Mr. D. was convinced that it was high time for him to think and act for himself. Reflecting on all the past intimacies between the families for seven years, and not being able to bring to his recollection one suspicious circumstance, and having reason to believe, from Mrs. Fairchild's attachment to his wife, that *she* had no suspicions, he concluded at once, as he afterwards told me, that it was a vile plot to ruin me. He thus became satisfied, before he heard one word from my lips, that my enemies were determined to destroy my character and depose me from the ministry; and that they were willing, in order to accomplish this object, to sacrifice the peace and reputation of his own family. He, however, wrote me a letter, requesting me to meet the deacons at his house. I replied to him that such a meeting would not probably result in any good; that I chose not to have any thing more to do with them; and that if he would request them to read to him the letters I had written them, he would be able to see the merits of the case as distinctly

* I do hope that Mrs. Drake will have too much respect for herself, as well as for the morals of the community, to avail herself of the license thus given by her husband.

as though I were present. Afterwards I agreed to meet them in the presence of deacon Simonds; but before the time of meeting arrived, I received a note from Mr. D. stating that such a meeting would be wholly fruitless; for he was satisfied that no explanations would change their views or purposes. He had seen deacon Vinton, and told him that he was perfectly convinced of his wife's innocence, and wanted a letter of dismission from the Church. The deacon began to speak about a confession; but Mr. D. interrupted him by saying that she had nothing to confess. "Well then," says the deacon, "I suppose I must do as I did when Mr. Fairchild went away,—be silent." Mr. D. expressed a wish to see me, and I went and spent the night at his house. Then, for the first time, I told him and his wife the whole story. The only ground on which they blamed me was that I had so long kept this matter concealed from them. I stated to them my reasons for so doing; which were that I knew Mrs. D. was innocent; that it would inflict a deep wound on their feelings, break up the peace of neighborhoods, mar the harmony of the Church, and especially expose me to the charge of slandering myself; for deacon Drake had told me at first, that they should say nothing about it, and therefore if the matter became public at all, it would become so through me, and thus, if their suspicions were groundless, I should be my own slanderer. On this account it was that I had not divulged the affair even to my wife. With these explanations they were satisfied.

I returned to Exeter, not knowing what next would follow, but hoped for the best. Soon after this, two anonymous letters were received through the Post Office, *unpaid*, the one addressed to the Rev. Henry Jewell, the minister of the Universalist Society in this town, and the other to James Burley, Esq., a member of the same Society, and Cashier of the Granite Bank. Both of these letters are dated March 15th, 1844, and both bear the Boston stamp, March 18th. The following is a literal copy of the letter addressed to Mr. Burley.

BOSTON, MARCH 15th, 1844.

DEAR SIR:—

As there are reports in circulation in this city, prejudicial to the moral character of the Rev. J. H. Fairchild, I have thought it my duty to write to you, to put you and the citizens of Exeter on your guard, lest any evil should result to your people from having the Rev. Gentleman amongst you. It is confidently reported here, and believed by many, that the Rev. Joy H. Fairchild left his Society in this city, on account of being suspected of criminal intercourse with the wife of one of his parishioners.

The husband did not hear of the matter till within a few weeks. He then took steps to have the matter exposed. But Mr. Fairchild came to Boston last week, and by fair promises, induced him, (the husband,) to stop further proceedings in the matter. The name of the husband is Nahum Dunbar, a very worthy man and good citizen. He lives on the corner of B Street and Broadway. A line addressed to the deacons of the Phillips Church, where Mr. Fairchild formerly preached, will bring an answer that will satisfy the people in Exeter, that they are entertaining a *wolf* in sheep's clothing.

You will please take such steps as will bring out the truth, and protect the innocent citizens of Exeter from the fangs of the destroyer of innocence and the happiness of families.

Respectfully Yours, &c.,

A FRIEND TO JUSTICE.

As the letter to Mr. Jewell is nearly verbatim, and in the same hand, it is unnecessary to publish it.

Soon after this Mr. Jewell received another letter, *unpaid*, dated and stamped March 29th, 1844. As it is very short I will here copy it. It is written in a different hand from the former.

DEAR SIR:—

BOSTON, MARCH 29, 1844.

Will you have the goodness to obtain the names of the deacons of the church over which J. H. Fairchild is now, and send the same to the Rev. T. D. Cook, of South Boston, AS SOON AS CONVENIENT.

EAST HARTFORD.

The Rev. Mr. Jewell did write to Mr. Cook, the Universalist minister of South Boston, whose letter in reply was put into my hands; but unfortunately it has been mislaid, otherwise I should publish it. It was a very proper reply to Mr. Jewell, kind in its spirit, and honest in its expressions; and for it I called in person to thank him. It gave a very correct account of the attempts, on the part of my enemies, to blast my character. I will venture to quote from memory one expression. Speaking of the individuals who were thus attempting my ruin, he says, "Their breath is the very concentrated essence of slander."

Why were these anonymous letters written to the above-named gentlemen? Evidently because they were Universalists, and the writer thought that they, having embraced a faith different from mine, would gladly circulate an ill report of an Orthodox clergyman, and eagerly pick at so sweet a bone. But the writer missed his aim. They, like honest men, pocketed the letters, and said nothing. They did as they would be done by. They behaved in the matter like gentlemen; and they are entitled to my warmest thanks, for the courteous manner in which they treated me.

My enemies thus failing in their object of bringing over these Universalist gentlemen to aid them in their work of destruction, soon devised another expedient. Accordingly on the 15th day of April, an anonymous Circular came into the Post Office in this town, in a packet mailed at Portsmouth, signed "Epaphroditus," dated at Exeter, but written in Boston, as is evident from one expression it contains. These printed Circulars were directed to thirty or forty of the most respectable gentlemen among us, and were soon circulated in Boston and elsewhere. As one of them was directed to the Post Master, he discovered the contents before any of them had been distributed. He kindly sought an interview with me, and said that as they were anonymous and libellous, he doubted whether the law compelled him to aid in their circulation, and that it might be well to destroy them; but on a little reflection I told him to let them go out; for I knew the enemies with whom I had to contend, and that if they failed to get them to the people through the post office, they would send some one here at midnight to put them under our doors. They were bent on my ruin, and nothing would satisfy them till that was accomplished. Accordingly the Circulars were issued, and here is a copy.

CIRCULAR.

A WOLF IN SHEEP'S CLOTHING.

A sincere friend to the cause of virtue and true religion earnestly solicits the attention of all who are interested in the common cause of the Redeemer and of his people, to the painful exposure which his duty to God and man impels him to make. He professes to be actuated by no sectarian prejudice or selfish spleen toward any living individual; his sole aim is to prevent the evil influence of crime from attaching itself to the cause of Christ. When any unworthy man, by a long course of duplicity and cunning, has been able to conceal his real character from the eyes of his fellows, even while the daily record of his deeds showed him to be a licentious pander to the darkest designs of Satan,—and that he was daily practising the most glaring outrages against the laws of God and of his country, it becomes the bounden duty of all who have at heart the cause which is suffering from such perfidy, to rend away the veil which hides his real character, and expose the DEMON to a confiding public. Such is the nature of the task I have undertaken, and in justification of myself I submit the following facts:

We have in our midst a preacher of the gospel, named J. H. Fairchild; and whatever he may have been able to effect in the way of winning golden opinions from those who know him not, it will be seen that he is indeed a "wolf in sheep's clothing," a serpent in the Eden of the church. Some ten or fifteen years since, Mr. F. was settled over a church in East Hartford, Connecticut, and was caught in a criminal intimacy with a female of his parish. How that affair was settled is still fresh in the minds of many. The clerical criminal came to South Boston, and was settled over the Phillips Church in that place. For several years he seemed a pattern of good behavior even to pastors. But the evil habit was too strongly seated to be controlled, except by constant reliance upon him who is able and willing to save. Within a few years he has been a constant object of suspicion, both by members of his church and parish. He was suspected, in more than one instance of invading the marriage covenant between some of the members of his own church. How this suspicion was reduced to a certainty, may be seen by the following stratagem adopted by those who had observed the incidents which led to the exposure. A lady of the parish was in the habit, at certain intervals, of going to a room which overlooked the parson's study, and of opening a particular bowd of the window, which was generally kept closed. The opening of the blind was a signal to the pastor, who was observed to leave his study as often as the signal was observed, to reach and enter the house, and was ultimately surprised by those who suspected him, even in the act of an adulterous connexion with another member of his own church. A partial exposure to the deacons of that church ensued; and it is inferred by the friends of the officers, that a just apprehension for the welfare of the church, and the pledges of an offending pastor, induced them to hush the matter up, on condition that he should leave the parish. He did so, and is now settled in Exeter, over a church which needs all the efficacy of real piety to heal its recent wounds, and in a town which has before experienced the unhappy reality of listening to preachers and laymen who have been slaves to the "lust of the flesh."

In so serious a matter as this, mere assertions should never be lightly taken, although to give names of the guilty and innocent sufferers by the criminality of Mr. Fairchild, is a painful task to those who are bound to pity the criminal while condemning and exposing the crime. Mr. D——r, a laborer in the South Boston Foundry, is the husband of the guilty woman, and within a few weeks he has become acquainted with the affair, and sent for the Rev. criminal to come and attend to it. He came, but his guilt was so manifest that an immediate rupture was the consequence, and after being forbidden the house by Mr. D., he fled from the city in trepidation and horror. Mrs. D——r resided in Mr. Fairchild's family before her marriage, was married from his house, has visited Exeter since his residence here, and has received his visits whenever he has visited the city. Suspicion and rumor have also connected with him in guilt several other married ladies of the city, and his character is now so foully stained, that his farther connexion with the church of Christ must reflect disgrace upon that cause which every true christian should strive to extend and glorify.

For confirmation of these facts, I refer to the present deacons of Phillips Church, at South Boston, who are acquainted with them, and who ought not to shrink from an open confession if interrogated. And with these well substantiated facts before them, I submit it to the friends of Religion, if such a man is suitable to preside over the spiritual welfare of any church in the kingdom of Christ.

EPAPHRODITUS.

Exeter, April 10, 1844.

On the evening of the same day in which the Circular was issued, the brethren of the church met in the vestry to consider what action, if any, should be taken in reference to that paper. It seemed to be the general opinion that no action was necessary, as Mr. Epaphroditus was an unknown personage, shooting his arrows of death in the dark, without any responsibility or fear of detection. It was very wisely determined by the brethren, that if the deacons of South Boston, who were referred to in the Circular, had any thing against my moral character, they ought, as honest men, to have made the fact known before my settlement here, and not have suffered me to leave South Boston with such high testimonials of character, and thus impose upon this church and society, especially when they knew that I had been preaching here for six months previous to my installation, and knowing, moreover the very day appointed for the ceremony to take place, and the very clergymen in their immediate vicinity who were to take part in consummating the proposed union between me and this people. But as reference was made to the deacons of South Boston, it was thought best that two of their number, though without a formal appointment by the church, should call on the deacons and inquire whether they were prepared to assume the responsibility of substantiating the grave charges in that Circular. They went immediately to South Boston, and had an interview with the deacons and Mr. Howe. But while they disclaimed all knowledge of the authorship of the Circular, and expressed their belief that certain portions of it were utterly false, yet they stated that they were in possession of certain facts which implicated my moral character, but refused to disclose any thing, except in my presence, though they had already made statements to others, as the very appearance of the Circular itself plainly demonstrated. This is the amount of all the information which the gentlemen from Exeter could obtain from them. They then made inquiries of several individuals, my former parishioners, as to the feelings of the deacons towards me, and as to my general character and standing in that community; and having satisfied themselves on those points, they returned and reported accordingly. As the church did not see fit to take any further action in the case, I thought it best to let the matter rest there.

About this time I wrote to a friend of the deacons in South Boston, requesting him to use his influence with them to have the matter end where it was, and stating that an investigation could not result in any good to them, or to that church, or to me; for though I was conscious of my innocence, yet I dreaded the anxiety, the fatigue, and the expense which must attend such an investigation. I requested him to obtain a certificate from the deacons, not as an indorsement of my character, but a simple statement of what they had often said to me, that they had no charges to prefer against me, and that they knew of no reason why I might not labor and be useful here, as I had been there. This, I believe, is the substance of what I wrote; but having no copy of the letter I quote only from memory. But no such certificate was given. I wanted simply to satisfy the brethren here, to avoid the trouble and perplexity of investigating the matter in Boston.

I soon perceived that there was quite an anxiety on the part of some

of the people here, to ascertain what those mysterious facts were, in possession of the deacons. And receiving a letter from Mr. Dunbar about this time, in which he expressed his opinion and desire that an investigation, in some form or other, should take place,—that it was due to himself and his wife, as well as to me, and the only way by which the mouths of the deacons could be effectually closed.

Accordingly I requested, through the Rev. Mr. Adams, of Boston, that an investigation might take place. At his suggestion, and with the consent of the deacons, the Board of Referees, already mentioned, was constituted, and the matter referred to them for their final action and decision.

The Board met on the 8th day of May at S. Boston. As I was quite feeble at the time, I requested the Rev. Mr. Albro of Cambridge to aid me in my defence. The deacons thought that if *I* had assistance, *they* must too; and so they introduced for this purpose, the Rev. A. A. Phelps of East Boston. But as they utterly refused to appear before that body in the character of *accusers*, but simply as *witnesses*, the Referees very properly concluded that Mr. Phelps had no right to be there; that it was an unheard of thing for witnesses to request the aid of Counsel to help them give in their testimony. They were requested to take the position of accusers, if they chose; but they declined. Only think of it; the deacons declining to be my accusers! Why, they had, in effect been my accusers for months, and perhaps years, behind my back; but now they occupy the station of simple witnesses. And they did appear simple enough before they got through. But more of this hereafter.

The Circular was read in the presence of the Referees, and the deacons were inquired of as to their knowledge of its paternity. They affirmed they knew not the writer, nor had they said any thing to authorize the writer to refer to them.* Then commenced the examination of witnesses. Mrs. Cranston Howe was the first witness upon the stand. She had some preliminaries to state in justification of herself in watching her neighbors. She said that in the summer of 1837, there was a young female boarding in her family to whom I paid more attention than she thought proper; and thus having her suspicions excited against me, she could not very well avoid keeping an eye upon me when I went to Mr. Dunbar's. The facts, as they came out before the Referees, were these. In the summer of 1837, the female who taught the Primary School in the

*Perhaps it ought to be noted here, that about a week before the Circular made its appearance, Mr. James Folsom, a member of the Church of which I was then pastor, called on me, and stated that he had recently been to Boston and had an interview with Josiah Dunham. Mr. F. mentioned to me privately, and in a christian manner, the remarks made to him by Mr. Dunham, respecting my character and conduct. They were in substance the statements made in the Circular. Mr. D. referred Mr. F. to the deacons of Phillips Church to confirm the truth of his statements. And yet the deacons, if they are to be credited, had said nothing! They had maintained a profound silence! Where then did these two men, (Mr. Dunham and Epaphroditus,) get their information? I say *two* men, because Mr. Dunham cannot be Epaphroditus; for he can neither read nor write except his own name,—a name which may be found on many a worthless bill of the Franklin Bank.

Since writing the above I have been informed that Thomas H. Dunham, a son of Josiah D. stated to Mr. John S. Parshley, a respectable citizen of S. Boston, the substance of that Circular, some two or three weeks before it was given to the public.

Vestry of my meeting house for several years, and who formerly boarded in my family for eight or ten months, was so much enfeebled by her labors in the school, that she retired into the country to visit her relatives and regain her health. She sent a younger sister to take her place in the school during her absence. Though I had been made acquainted with the elder sisters and the brothers, for they had frequently been at my house when in Boston, yet this sister I had never before seen, nor had she previously visited the city. As she was a stranger, and appeared, at times, depressed and lonely, and as I had been the committee of that school some eight or nine years, (though I had then resigned,) I paid this young lady a good deal of attention, in order to cheer up her spirits, make her contented, and encourage her in her work ; but no more attention than I should have been pleased to have a clergyman pay to a daughter of my own, in similar circumstances. She boarded with Mrs. Howe. On one occasion as I was passing out of my front door, just as this teacher was going into her school, I said to her, half in earnest and half in jest, "A gentleman has just called and invited me to marry him ; and if I get a good fee, perhaps I will give it to you." I thought no more of it till a few days after, she asked me if I would be willing to show her the way to Louisburgh Square. As I went to the Post Office daily about 11 o'clock, I told her that I would do it with pleasure. As it was in the month of June or July, the schools were all dismissed at that hour. Immediately after dismissing her school, she returned to Mrs. Howe's to prepare herself to walk with me to Boston. I waited for her till nearly half past 11 o'clock, and as she had not arrived, I concluded to go without her. I went on, and just as I was passing the corner of Broadway towards the new bridge, I saw her coming. I slackened my pace, and she soon overtook me. As we were entering Washington street, if I remember correctly, I gave her the marriage fee, (three dollars,) and told her to go into some store with me and buy a dress. She did so. I charged her not to tell any one of it, particularly her sister, because I had never made her such a present, though she once boarded with us, and it might excite unpleasant feelings, especially as she was somewhat dissatisfied because we had refused to receive her a second time as a boarder. Mrs. Howe, it seems, when the young lady left the house to go to Boston, suspecting that she was going in company with me, went up to her chamber window, and put out her head to ascertain the fact. And when she saw me walking slowly in the same direction, and the young lady following after, it was to her mind, proof positive that there was something wrong going on. And when the girl returned with a dress, and said it was a present, but refused to tell the giver, then there was a *demonstration* of iniquity. At last the girl, being teased and threatened, for peace sake, disclosed my name as the donor ; and did then and has since given the most solemn assurances, both verbal and written, that I had ever treated her like a gentleman and a Christian, and had never said or done a single thing which made the thought pass her mind that I wished to injure her. This came out before the Referees. And this was the reason assigned by Mrs. H. for watching Mrs. D. and myself.

On the 27th day of August 1841, as has been already stated, deacon

Vinton made his sudden and outrageous attack upon me. It was done on this wise. Between 1 and 2 o'clock of that day, deacon V., being somewhat defective in his organ of vision, could not see distinctly from his own house some twenty rods distant, and therefore goes slyly into Mr. Howe's, and places himself in close contact with Mrs. H. at the front window, with the green blind open a short distance, and there they sit or stand peeping through to make discoveries.* In the mean time, deacon Drake's house being further off still, the deacon goes up into the attic, opens the scuttle window, peers out his head and watches narrowly. And the girl, as described above, opened the blind a short distance for the admission of light to dress herself. And as she forgot to close it, and went off to School, then the eyes of the watchers were open wide. By and by, as I was passing the house to pay Mr. Conley his bill, I stopped to leave the Herald. When I came out, the deacon, (so he stated to the Referees,) in order to be certain and no mistake, that I was the very man who went in, and came out, left Mrs. Howe, and started on in hot pursuit. What then transpired has been already described. At this stage of the investigation, I cannot tell what the Referees *thought*; but I well remember how they *looked*.

And now, reader, just reflect on that scene! Two grave deacons of a Church, the one peeping through the blind, and the other near the top of his house, at the scuttle window, peering out his head like a turtle from its shell, watching their pastor, who was wholly unconscious of what was going on, and as innocent and harmless in his movements as a child. And then too, only think of the previous character of the principal watcher! Set a rogue to catch a rogue. "They evil *think* who evil *do*."† Consider further that just two weeks from that very day, Mrs. Dunbar became a happy mother! I say *happy*, because she knew nothing of the attempt of her jealous neighbors to ruin her. Shame, shame on Mrs. H.! She ought to have had more respect for the character of her sex than to admit the *possibility* that I should call at such a time and under such circumstances, for so vile a purpose. None of the females in that neighborhood, more pure minded than herself, ever thought of such a thing. And they never watched. They all view the matter as it ought to be—with contempt and indignation.‡

*Mrs. H. has since had twins, which I hope will furnish her, in future, with some more useful and honorable employment than watching her neighbors.

It is worthy of notice here, that during two of the three years in which Mrs. Howe was employing herself in watching Mrs. Dunbar, she frequently called on Mrs. D., and often expressed a desire for greater intimacy!

† To let the public see more clearly what an espionage has been exercised over me by my watchers, I will here state an incident which happened in May 1843. Mrs. Fairchild was taken unexpectedly ill, and required the immediate attention of a nurse. Not being able to procure a suitable one in Exeter even for a few days, I took the 9 o'clock train for Boston, not thinking of going that day, ten minutes before I left my house. The nurse I wished to procure lived in the vicinity of Mr. Dunbar's. As his house was usually my stopping place when in S. Boston, I went directly there, but found the house closed. On ringing the bell, Mrs. P., residing at the next door, hearing the bell, came out and informed me that Mr. and Mrs. D. had gone to Bridgewater,

When this matter was disposed of, the East Hartford affairs were introduced. We went into them, and heard all that the deacons had to say on that topic. But when I produced my testimonials which I brought with me from Connecticut, all of which the deacons had either heard or read long before, and which are now published for the information of the public, the Referees could find nothing from that quarter to implicate my moral character, or to justify the deacons in their attacks upon me. That matter therefore was soon ended.

Near the close of the session deacon Drake handed to the chairman (deacon Noyes) a paper signed by several individuals, (I know them not, and choose not to know them, for their names were not read,) stating that they had, sometime or other, heard me say that, if it had not been for my friends in Boston, I should have starved. But I assured the Referees that if I had used such an expression, it was a mere hyperbole, conveying more than was literally intended, and that my meaning was simply that I had seen the time when I should have felt great embarrassment in meeting my expenses, had it not been for the aid of my friends in the city. How any one could have supposed that I meant a literal starvation, is more than I can conjecture; for there were neighbors around me of other denominations, Baptists, Methodists, Unitarians and Universalists, who would most cheerfully have contributed of their substance to prevent such a catastrophe. But the deacon's object was to prove that, as I had paid money about that time, which was given me for reducing a mortgage on my house, I must have told a falsehood about my embarrassment. But more of this hereafter.*

And then to cap the climax, (for one would think the judgment day had come, when my whole life was to be reviewed) they introduced a female who had lived in my family in 1833 and 4, who testified that I

but would return in the course of the afternoon. I went directly to see the nurse, hoping that she would be able to return with me that day in the last train. But she could not go till morning. I returned to Mrs. P's with whom Mrs. D. had left the key of the door. I unlocked the door, went up into the chamber which I always occupied when there, and as I had not slept any the preceding night, I rested and slept some hours upon the bed. About 6 o'clock, Mr. and Mrs. D. returned with their little daughter. When they arrived I was sitting alone in the parlor. Soon after this deacon Drake inquires of Mr. P. why Mrs. Dunbar left the key of the door at his house when she went to Bridgewater? Mr. P. told him what he understood was the reason; but the deacon seemed to doubt it. Within a few days Mrs. H., the famous watcher, called on Mr. P. and made some inquiries, which Mrs. P. did not comprehend, and therefore gave her no satisfaction. Mr. and Mrs. P. being profoundly ignorant of what was going on, could not imagine what was meant by such inquiries. But since the meeting of the Referees, they have no doubt as to the object of my watchers.

* My salary was not regularly and punctually paid. The arrearages from May 1836 to Nov. 1841, together with the interest, amounted to about four hundred dollars, which sum was finally raised and paid by subscription. This circumstance, in addition to sickness in my family and other uncommon expenses, caused me, one year, to be in debt about three hundred dollars. I mentioned this fact to some of my friends in Boston, who cheerfully relieved me from my embarrassment. And I think it probable, though I cannot now distinctly recollect, that at this very time some individuals gave me money expressly for the purpose of reducing the mortgage on my house. Most of my papers containing the names and the sums given me for different objects, were destroyed, with a multitude of other papers, when I removed from Boston to Exeter.

had kissed her! The circumstances as they came out before the Referees were these:—That female had previously resided near the house which I then occupied, as housekeeper for her father, sustained an excellent character, and had recently become pious and joined the church. Some five or six months after she came into my family, she was in deep affliction in consequence of the derangement of a beloved brother. She seemed greatly dejected, and at times unhappy. I endeavored to console her.—One evening, as she was passing my study door, which usually stood partly open, I asked her to come in. I spoke comforting words to her, and expressed a hope that her brother's derangement would not be permanent. I truly pitied her, reminding her that we were in a world of trouble, but at the same time assuring her that we had this precious promise to comfort us, "All things work together for good to them that love God;" or words to this effect. And as she left the room I kissed her. And this act she never mentioned to any human being till ten years after, though I enjoined no secrecy upon her. The cause of her mentioning it will soon be stated.

And what else did she testify? Why, that I never said one indelicate word to her, nor ever attempted an indelicate act; that she continued to reside in my family from that time, for nearly one year, and that my whole deportment towards her was always respectful and proper. It was in evidence that she was with me at my bedside when I had the spasmodic cholera in 1834, and heard what was then supposed to be my last prayer and my dying counsel, and that she had often spoken to others of my happy frame of mind, and of my preparation, as she thought, to meet my final Judge.

After she ceased to live with us, she still continued to reside in the place, often called at my house without ceremony, frequently consulted me alone in my study, with as much freedom and confidence as though I had been her father. Three female members of the church, of high standing as to character and credibility, testified that from the year 1834 to 1840, they had often heard her speak of me in the highest terms of approbation. They stated certain expressions which they had heard her use in my praise, which it might appear vain in me to repeat. One of them testified that she heard her say, when speaking of the fall of a particular clergyman, through licentiousness, "Well, they can never say such a thing about our minister."

But how came this girl to testify? If I have been correctly informed, the facts are these:—More than a year after I had resigned my office as pastor of the Phillips Church, she was visiting at deacon Drake's. The deacon wished to pump her; and knowing that she once lived in my family, and had afterwards resided with Mrs. Dunbar for several years, he probably thought he might obtain some information from her to aid him in his efforts to blast my character. He begins, as I am told, to state to her privately and in confidence, his suspicions of me and Mrs. D., with the grounds of them, such as the signals, &c. (This is the very man who had promised forever to let me alone when I asked my dismissal.) She told him that she had never seen any thing improper between us in all my intimacies there, and she would not believe Mrs. D. to be guilty of

any such thing. The deacon then asked her whether she had ever seen any thing out of the way in my conduct when she resided in my house, saying that he would give a good deal if he could only believe me innocent! Yes, *innocent*, I am told, is the very word he used; but who can doubt, from his conduct, that he meant *guilty*.* Was this honesty or duplicity? Just think of it. Here is a man professedly anxious to have me proved innocent, when he knew that a conviction of my innocence on his mind, would have compelled him, if he had one particle of christianity, to humble himself in dust and ashes for his abuse of me, and to ask my forgiveness in penitence and tears. Is deacon Drake a man to do this? Let those who know him best answer. Has he done it in reference to Mrs. Dunbar? Not one of the Referees, I presume, has a doubt of her innocence. The clearing of me by that body was the clearing of her.—But the deacon has made no confession to her, or to her injured husband. And if she were now to apply to the church for a letter, I doubt not he would oppose and prevent it if he could.

After the evidence was all in, and the deacons had nothing more to adduce against me, the Referees, having been alone an hour or two to ascertain each other's views, adjourned from the 10th to the 15th day of May, to meet at the house of Rev. Mr. Winslow, there to make up their final judgment in the case. They met accordingly, and having sat in secret session from the early part of the evening till after midnight, they came to the following unanimous Result:—

"At the request of the Rev. J. H. Fairchild, of Exeter, N. H., the undersigned met at South Boston, on the 8th of May, 1844, to investigate charges made against his moral character, in an anonymous Circular, which had been recently distributed in Exeter and elsewhere.

In this Circular, the Deacons of the Phillips Church in South Boston were referred to as having facts in their possession sustaining the aforesaid charges.

Having been applied to by members of the Rev. Mr. Fairchild's Church in Exeter, to communicate these facts, the Deacons of the Phillips Church then stated that they did not know the origin of the Circular, and that there were assertions in it which they believed to be utterly false. They disavowed any intention or wish to injure the reputation of Mr. Fairchild, and stated that though impressions had been made upon them by what had come to their knowledge derogatory to his character, they had been cautious and reserved, (and as some might think to a fault) in not making a public disclosure of them, or of the circumstances from which they were derived. But now, as they had been referred to in the Circular, and had been appealed to by members of the church in Exeter, they were willing, if requested by Mr. Fairchild, to state all the facts within their knowledge which had served to excite against him suspicions of conduct or intentions inconsistent with the christian character.

The Deacons of Phillips Church, at the request of Mr. Fairchild, then made a statement, accompanied with the testimony of other individuals, members of said Church. A correspondence of great length growing out of the facts in question, was also read.

After a protracted and laborious investigation of all the particulars touching this subject, the undersigned are constrained to say that the circumstances brought to view as tending to excite suspicion against the Rev. Mr. Fairchild, do not impair our confi-

* Mrs. Drake has recently said to Mrs. V., a member of the church in high standing, that her husband, (deacon D.) had lost all confidence in me as a minister, from the first year of my settlement in South Boston. The reasons assigned for this loss of confidence were of so trivial a nature, that Mrs. V. did not burden her memory with them, deeming them no reasons at all. And yet he could sit under my ministry for thirteen years after this, and receive the sacramental bread and wine at my hands, all the while believing me a bad man, and having no more confidence in me than he has now!

dence in his moral and christian character. In this remark, we include also alleged misconduct on his part, while pastor of a church in East Hartford, Conn.; and we are happy to state that after a severe and thorough scrutiny, nothing has appeared in any part of his life which prevents our according to him our full confidence as a minister of Christ.

We are happy, therefore, to assure the church in Exeter, under the care of Rev. Mr. Fairchild, that, so far as our knowledge extends, they may continue to cherish an undiminished confidence in him.

We indulge the hope that our judgment in the case, having been virtually though not formally invited by those who have submitted the testimony, will have weight with them, and that the Rev Mr. Fairchild will be able to pursue the work of the ministry with his former faithfulness and success.

H. WINSLOW,
N. ADAMS,
W. A. STEARNS,
THO. M. VINSON,
NATH'L DANA,
DANIEL NOYES.

A true copy,

Attest,

W. A. STEARNS, Scribe."

Boston, May 15th, 1844.

The reader will doubtless wish to inquire here, why the Referees, in their Result, say so little about the deacons? A very natural inquiry it must be confessed, if what I have stated of their conduct be true. This is a point about which, perhaps, I ought not to speak, and I should not speak, if the omission would not seem to weaken the credibility of my story. The question must of necessity press itself upon the mind of every reader, "How came the Referees thus triumphantly to acquit Mr. Fairchild, without passing the severest censures upon the members and officers of a church who had treated him in such an unkind and unchristian manner?" Surely this matter needs explanation, and I will endeavor to explain it according to my best knowledge, trusting that the Referees will correct me if I do not explain it truly.

After they had ascertained each other's views, I was informed by one of their number that my acquittal would be triumphant and unanimous, (which I never doubted from the beginning,) but the difficulty with them was in relation to the deacons. I told him that the deacons were not on trial,—that the Referees had been examining into *my* character and conduct; and if they were ready to pronounce *me* innocent, I preferred that the deacons should be spared. I suggested to him the probability that if the deacons were censured, the Phillips Church might feel compelled to deal with them, which I feared would scatter and divide a church which it had been my labor and anxiety for fourteen years to build up and keep united. I assured him that I had no hostile feelings towards them; that I wished them to go on prosperously in that church; that public opinion in South Boston would be punishment enough; and that I hoped, when this matter was over, they would be quiet and let me alone. And I have since been informed, by one of their number, that it was on this ground they acted, and that, as the deacons were not on trial, it was not altogether in their line of duty to censure them. But, said one of them to me, "If they do not now let you alone to pursue your work at Exeter unmolested, they will doubtless hear from the Referees a full and free

expression of their views and feelings.”* He then spoke of the spirit and temper manifested by my accusers, which I could not mention without a breach of confidence. And I am afraid that what I have now said will be so regarded; but when my present trying and peculiar position is considered, I trust I shall be excused.

This brings my story down to the close of the meeting of the Referees. Before I proceed any further, I beg leave just to recur to what I have already done to vindicate myself from the slanders and lies which have been uttered against me. I first gave my testimonial from the church in East Hartford. And is not that document worthy of credit?—a document given me by a church of which I had been pastor for eleven years, and approved by such men as Samuel Pitkin, Epaphras Bidwell, Eliab Pratt, John Judson, Timothy Hall, and many others of high character and standing in the church and the community? Are the surmises and rumors originating as Mr. Spring truly says, “with my personal enemies, and without a doubt malicious and false,” to be weighed against such a document, and others of the like import, signed by ten of the most respectable clergymen in Hartford and vicinity, who had been associated with me in the labors of the ministry for many years, and who knew me so intimately? If such testimonials, given by such men, are powerless against the tongue of slander, then verily have we fallen on bad times, and we may well inquire what man, and especially what clergyman, is safe?†

As to the character of the Referees, before whom I confronted my former deacons in South Boston, it is not necessary that I should say anything. The opinions and decision of such men, “after a severe and thorough scrutiny” of any moral question submitted to them, will not very likely be controverted by the citizens of Boston, or any other place where they are known. For, be it remembered, they held three long and tedious sessions, commencing each day soon after two o’clock, and continuing till nearly midnight. They gave full liberty to the deacons to say all they had to say, allowing them to begin, if they chose, as one of the Referees expressed it, “from the fall of Adam, and come down to the present time.”

* During the recess above mentioned, one or more of the Referees received an anonymous letter, entreating them to spare the deacons. I have seen that letter, and the hand-writing was quite familiar to me. It was doubtless written by one who was present at the trial, and who well knew what the result must be. And while he expected my acquittal, he begged that the deacons might not be censured. This might have been one reason why they were not censured.

† Since writing the above, the Memoir of the Rev. Dr. Nettleton has fallen into my hands. I there find that even that godly and devoted servant of Christ did not escape the tongue of calumny. His moral purity was, at one time so fiercely assailed, and such vile slanders reported about him, that several of the most eminent clergymen in Connecticut deemed it their duty to interpose in his behalf. And when that man of God was thus threatened with destruction, his brethren in the ministry and in the church did interpose their names and influence to save him. I would here refer the reader to several notes in his Memoir, commencing on page 353; and many more might have been added, for the matters there referred to are fresh in my own remembrance.

And when they closed, the chairman asked them, "Gentlemen have you done? Is this all?" They said, "yea."

I come now to another scene in this drama. Immediately after my acquittal by the Referees, I returned to Exeter, hoping that my enemies would then allow me quietly to pursue my Master's work, without further let or hindrance. But on Saturday, June 15th, I received a letter from the Rev. N. Adams of Boston, informing me that certain papers had recently been put into his hands, accusing me of criminal connexion with Rhoda Davidson, and of being the father of her illegitimate child. And these papers, it seems, were procured at the instance of deacon Drake, carried by him to the Rev. Mr. Aiken, and by Mr. Aiken handed over to Mr. Adams. On Monday morning following, I took the early train of cars, and arrived at the house of Mr. Adams about 9 o'clock. All the former Board of Referees, except Mr. Stearns, were soon present. Rhoda's paper was then read, signed by herself, and witnessed by Mrs. M. Robbins and Mrs. S. P. Shailer. Mrs. Easty's paper was also read, signed by herself, and written and witnessed by deacon Alvan Simonds.* The moment Mr. Adams had finished the reading, I raised my hand, and said with emphasis, "It is a tissue of falsehoods, from beginning to end. I never touched the girl. And what is founded on truth, is a gross misrepresentation." This I presume the Referees will remember, was my very language. My letter to Rhoda was also read,† of which I readily

* Mr. Adams assured me that these were the documents on which I was to be tried; that my accusers could not depart from them in their testimony before any tribunal; that though they might say other things, yet if they contradicted what they had now stated, it would invalidate their whole testimony. So I understood him; and this, I suppose is the legal and proper view of the case. And yet both of them, upon the stand, did palpably contradict, in more instances than one, what they had solemnly affirmed in their affidavits.

† A great deal has been said about this letter, and various opinions have been expressed as to its meaning and design. I do not know but that such a letter might have been written by a guilty man; but I do know, and God knows, that it was not written by a guilty man. The Reviewer of the doings and Result of the Council, published first in the N. E. Puritan, and afterwards, with alterations and additions, in a pamphlet form, has given a true exposition of that letter. And although he was an entire stranger to me at the time, having never spoken to me or had one word of communication with me, yet if he had his eye upon my heart, and known perfectly my views, and feelings, and motives, when writing that letter, he could not have given a more correct interpretation of its meaning. But there is one expression which he has not explained, and those who are determined to make me out a guilty man, inquire with an air of triumph, "How could Mr. Fairchild, if innocent, make use of this expression, 'What is done cannot be undone?'" By this expression, I meant simply the fact of her having obtained money from me in the manner she did. That was done, and could not be undone. I was willing to overlook and forgive all the wrong she had done me, if she would, in future, protect me from all harm, as she had promised to do; not because I was guilty, for she knew I never had any illicit connexion with her; but because my character was as dear to me as life; and also because I was a clergyman, and as such could not be even suspected of impurity without injuring that cause which was dearer to me than life. Besides, I thought at the time, that she was influenced by others to do as she had done, and this consideration weighed not a little on my mind when I wrote that letter; and I now think that if the powerful influence of money had not been brought to bear upon her, she never would have said and done what she has.

One thing, I believe, is an admitted point among all men of common sense and common honesty, viz. that in explaining a document of such a nature, the paper is to be taken as a whole, and not in detached parts. How then can any man say, unl

acknowledged myself the writer. This letter had previously been put into the hands of deacon Drake by Rev. Mr. Shailer, a Baptist clergyman of Brookline. Copies of that letter were taken by the deacon or by his permission, and one of them shown, I am told, by Josiah Dunham in State street; and on the very morning when my attempt at suicide was announced in the *Boston Times*,* that letter was there published. How came it there except through deacon Drake! He, and he alone, was entrusted with my letter. Without his aid, therefore, or connivance, that letter could not thus have found its way to the public. It was done solely to injure me,—to impress on the minds of all a deep conviction of my guilt. As suicide, is, in general, deemed a confession, it was doubtless thought by my enemies to be very important that the letter should go out at that time; for they well knew that my letter could not condemn me, *without a previous presumption of my guilt*, while on a *previous presumption of my innocence*, it would tend rather to my acquittal than my condemnation.—For this object, beyond all doubt, the letter was published. And I shall never forget the solemnity and impressiveness of the remark made by Rev. Mr. Adams, when the publishing of that letter came up before the Council. Said Mr. A., “When I learned that the letter had been given to the public, I regarded the act as a felony.”

The Referees, after a short consultation in private, advised me, if innocent, either to indict those persons for a conspiracy to extort money from me, or to refer the matter to the Suffolk South Association for investigation, or convene a Council in Exeter for their examination and decision. The last plan recommended was finally adopted. I think now that the first would have been preferable.

I spent the night with Mr. Adams. I was greatly excited and distressed. My way seemed hedged up. I knew my innocence; but where to look for one particle of evidence in my favor, I knew not. Could I have foreseen a tithe of the evidence which has since been obtained, I should have felt and acted differently. But as the case then stood, I was almost in despair. Mr. Adams went over to deacon Drake's in the evening, and returned with the information that my enemies were making arrangements to get out an indictment against me; and though he had obtained

blinded by prejudice or passion, that the letter, AS A WHOLE, is an acknowledgement of guilt, when the VERY FIRST SENTENCE is a denial of it?—a denial which has been made from the beginning? And what shall we think of a man who begins a letter by a solemn denial of a charge made against him, and then goes directly on to admit it in the very same letter? Why, in such a case he would be deemed as acting more like a fool than a knave.

*I would here express my gratitude to the editor of the *Daily Times*, for the kind manner in which he treated me. Even when he published my letter, he could not see in it that evidence of guilt which some fancied was as clear as the light of noon. He pleaded for charity, and a suspension of judgment. And in his article of the 5th of August, I could see the same spirit of courtesy and kindness. That paper fell into my hands while on my way to the White Mountains, and truly it was reviving to my almost broken heart. For all this I thank him. I might say the same of the editor of the *Daily Mail*. He, too, has treated my case with much candor and fairness. These editors would not swell the cry, “Crucify him! crucify him;” May God reward them. Indeed, I have noticed with pleasure that most of the secular presses have spoken of my painful case with moderation and sympathy.

an assurance from the deacon that farther proceedings should, for the present, be arrested, yet, having so often witnessed what little dependence I could place on his promises, I did not feel secure, and thought it probable that I should be arrested in the morning. I spent a sleepless night, arose early in the morning, secured a carriage to take me to the depot, and was waiting impatiently for its arrival, when Mr. Adams came down from his chamber. This was the time when he says he proposed the question to me as to my innocence or guilt, and when my appearance made such an unfavorable impression on his mind. The truth is, I have no distinct recollection of his proposing to me the question at that time. I was all excitement and anxiety about the arrival of the carriage, lest it should not come in season. And as it could not approach near Mr. A.'s house, the passage-way being obstructed by the erection of a new building, I went repeatedly to the door or window to watch the carriage at the head of the court. Considering this circumstance, and my fear of an indictment, I think no candid person will wonder at my strange appearance, or impute it to the cause which seemed to have impressed itself on the mind of Mr. A. Besides, I had denied it most solemnly and explicitly the morning previous; and my experience has taught me that no man gains credit by the frequency of his oaths and denials. If I am not to be credited in one solemn asseveration, I should hardly expect to be by a frequent repetition.

My readers will not I trust accuse me of arrogance or irreverence by reminding them that a certain Governor once proposed a question to the accused, and that the accused "answered him to never a word; insomuch that the Governor marvelled greatly."

In this state of mind I returned to Exeter, hardly knowing where I was, or where I had been. When I look back to that period, there seems a mist of confusion and indistinctness about it which I cannot explain, except on the ground that my mind was then in an incipient state of derangement, which soon became complete, to the utter dethronement of my reason. Scarcely knowing what I did, (for I considered myself a ruined man,) I called the Church together, made a brief statement of my case, asserted my innocence, resigned my office, and before morning, became a maniac! Early on the second morning, I made the attempt on my life, which was described by Dr. Perry before the Council. The loss of blood soon restored my reason; and I verily believed that my days and troubles were ended,—that my enemies had accomplished all that they could do, and would of course be satisfied, though I fervently prayed *then*, and do *now*, that God would forgive them their wrongs to a man, who had never designedly injured them, or thrown a straw in their way.*

* Since my recovery I have been told that my derangement broke out in all its fury sometime after midnight, and that when the doctor and other gentlemen came in, I was afraid of them till assured that they were my friends, and that I then embraced them with much affection, and inquired with great agitation and terror whether Vinton and Drake were here; begging that if they were, I might be kept from them; but not even then expressing the least enmity towards them, or any desire to injure them. Such was my train of thought when bereft of reason.

In two weeks and one day from the time of this accident, so nearly fatal to my life, and when my feebleness can be better imagined than described, I received a letter from the Rev. Mr. Riddel, chairman of the Committee of the Suffolk South Association, dated July 5th, summoning me to meet that Committee at a room in the Marlboro' Hotel, to confront my accusers. I will here quote the first paragraph of that letter:—"Sir, the Committee appointed by the Suffolk South Association, to investigate the charges made against you by Rhoda Davidson, have fixed upon Tuesday, July 9th inst., at 10 o'clock A. M., as the time when they will give you an opportunity to meet your accusers face to face, in presence of that Committee; and to bring forward any testimony, or other evidence which you may have to produce in your own vindication against the said charges." The time of this meeting was afterwards deferred for one week. When this letter was received, I was still very feeble. What testimony or evidence the chairman thought I could produce in so short a time, and in such feeble health, is utterly beyond my power to conceive. It seemed to me that the Committee had allowed themselves to be duped by my enemies and accusers;* and giving full credit to their stories, they regarded me, of course, as a guilty wretch, unworthy to live among a christian people, a single day,—a sort of Jonah on board the ship, and that they must throw me overboard to save the ship from sinking, and the sooner it was done the better. I might have been mistaken, but such were my honest views, and being such I fearlessly proclaim them. I have no desire to injure these gentlemen. In their motives they might have been pure and upright; and I would speak of their undue haste in this matter with all kindness. They probably felt themselves goaded on by public sentiment which was generally against me. And no wonder; for the circumstances, as they then appeared, were very dark. Every evil thing which my enemies could say or imagine was uttered against me; and nearly

* When I speak of these gentlemen as being duped, it is not my design to excite any distrust, either of their acuteness or discernment. But since the Bible intimates the possibility that deception may be practiced on the very elect, why should they regard themselves as an exception? They had to deal with an intelligent, cunning and artful girl,—one who had her lesson well prepared before they ever saw her, and ready to extricate herself from a sudden embarrassment with a quickness and a plausibility truly wonderful. An instance of this came out during her cross-examination. It had been testified by Mrs. Usher and Miss Matthews that she had represented herself to them as the natural sister of Mrs. Turnbull. For when they asked her who she was, being an entire stranger to them, she replied, "I am the sister of Mrs. Turnbull. Mr. Turnbull married my sister." And how did she extricate herself from this difficulty? Why, she replied, with the quickness of lightning, "I meant that Mr. Turnbull was the clergyman who married my sister to her husband!" I will give another instance of her art and cunning. She testified before the Council that her child bore a strong resemblance to me, and especially to my son William, whose hair and eyes are as black as ebony. But afterwards, when her mother's deposition was read, stating that the child's hair was light and its eyes blue, like its mother's; and Mr. Folsom testified to the same, having twice seen the child and taken it on his knee, she found herself in quite a quandary. One would think it almost impossible to get rid of this embarrassment. But she was ready at once, even for such an emergency as this. When reminded by one of the females at the public house of the palpable contradiction between her testimony and that of her mother and Mr. Folsom, as to the color of the child's hair, she replied, without a moment's hesitation, "La! Mr. Fairchild's hair is naturally light, but he colors it every morning."

all, except those who had known me the longest and most intimately, did indeed regard me as "a wolf in sheep's clothing,"—yea, as a devil incarnate.

Feeble as I then was, I at first agreed to obey the summons. But my persecutors, probably aware that I was coming, succeeded a few days before, as I was credibly informed, in obtaining an indictment against me, either to prevent my going to Boston, or to seize me on my arrival.—This, among other reasons, induced me to have my first trial before a Council in Exeter. And the meeting of this Council was pressed upon me, without giving me due time for preparation. In a letter now before me, written by Mr. Riddel, dated July 10th, only three weeks from the time of my derangement, stating that "the Association will not come to their Result in the case, until after the meeting of the Council at Exeter, if that Council is held *soon*. If it could be convened as soon as Wednesday of next week, it would be desirable. The more promptly you meet the case, the better."* I concluded from this letter, that there was

*The manner in which Mr. Riddel conducted the prosecution against me, was a matter of surprise and grief to me, as well as to many others. About a week before the Council met, he came to see me. We received him as a friend. We confided to him our secrets. We stated to him our evidence from Edgecomb, thinking that he would be as much gratified to learn the evidence in my favor, as any other friend. He promised not to mention the fact to any one; and I presume he kept his promise. But in his examination of the principal witness, he evidently availed himself of that information to my injury. Instead of acting the part of a mutual friend, uncommitted to either side, as I expected, no lawyer could have been more anxious to save his client than he was to save her. He was not contented to let her tell her story in her own way; but proposed questions of such a nature and in such a form as would lead any witness, devoid of conscience and the fear of God, to testify falsely. He tried to invalidate my depositions from Edgecomb, taken as they were under the sanction of an oath, and he would evidently have been glad to exclude them altogether from the Council. At one time, in the course of Rhoda's cross-examination, she grossly insulted me, so that I felt compelled to claim the protection of the Moderator. Mr. R. immediately arose, with a countenance of cherry hue, and claimed protection for the witness. This satisfied me that I should not be permitted, in the presence of the Council, to charge home upon the witness her abominable lies, without a scene of uproar and confusion which might greatly impede their proceedings. I then suffered them to go on, without contradiction, to the end. Mr. Riddell treated Rhoda with great attention,—walked arm in arm with her to and from the Lecture Room, in such a lover-like manner as to excite disgust,—and in all respects conducted towards her, as if he thought her a paragon of purity and virtue. And I have recently received a letter from a gentleman of high standing in the church and community, residing in another State, who, in noticing the above circumstances, exclaims in amazement, "Miss Rhoda arm in arm with the Rev. Mr. Riddel! Really, very fine! I think the remembrance of his gallantry at Exeter will not be a very agreeable reminiscence with him." But I do hope that she will never take advantage of it, to serve him as she has me, though I never walked with her arm in arm. It may be well for him, however, to be on his guard. And all this was done, be it remembered, when she was publicly proclaiming her own shame without a blush, and boldly acknowledging that she had violated her oath, made to me before God, that if I would pay her money, she would preserve me harmless,—a man who, as she well knew, had never wronged her. Why, the very circumstances under which she came forward, ought to have made him cautious and distrustful of such a witness. As she felt not the obligation of her oath to me, how could he believe that she felt the obligation of her oath to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth to the Council? He ought to have reflected that any person who will lie to obtain money once, will lie to obtain money a second time. For money she promised not to lie about me, and for money she violated that promise. If Mr. Riddel came to the Council convinced, (as he evidently did) that she would tell the truth, and that I would lie, how could he leave the Council with that conviction? In her cross examination, which was lame and mea

a determination on the part of the Committee, to expel me from the Association, (when they well knew that I could not appear before that body to defend myself,) "if the Council was not held *soon*." And to have the fact come before the Council that I had been expelled, I knew must operate greatly to my disadvantage; and therefore I consented to assemble them weeks before I could be properly prepared. But I do not regret it now; nor do I complain of their Result. The public, I believe, are now much more likely to come to a knowledge of the truth in the case, than they would have been had the Council acquitted me. Of one thing I am sure, that had I been acquitted, the story of my wrongs would never have been published to the world. Of course many would never have been furnished with the means of judging correctly as to my innocence or guilt.

I will now state the plan adopted and the means employed to induce Rhoda Davidson publicly to accuse me. A gentleman in Boston told deacon Vinton that a girl who once lived in my family had become the father of an illegitimate child. Deacon V. immediately communicates the fact to deacon Drake, and he, being quicker on the scent and lighter on the foot than deacon V. soon commences a search for the girl. He quickly learns that the Rev. Mr. Shailer, of Brookline, is the very man to

gre enough, she was detected in many falsehoods. The Reviewer of my trial has pointed out about a dozen; and if the Report had been more full, he might have greatly enlarged the number. But as Mr. R. came to the Council with his mind made up as to my guilt, so he left the Council with his mind unchanged. And it would seem that even the condemnation of the Council would not satisfy him. He was not willing to have the public believe that there were even *six* members of the Council who voted for my acquittal. He returns to Boston and writes a letter, as I am credibly informed, to some friend in a distant part of the State, and permits an extract of that letter to be published in the N. E. Puritan,—an extract which has given me more pain than any and all the pieces which I have seen published on my case. A part of that extract I will here quote. "The long conflict is over. The triumph of truth and justice is gained. The Council at Exeter brought in their result yesterday between 5 and 6 o'clock P. M. to convict Mr. Fairchild of all the charges. The vote stood 19 to 6. The six who did not concur, are not to be understood as voting for his acquittal. The verdict is VIRTUALLY UNANIMOUS; and that of the public, I may say, entirely so. Great indignation is felt in view of the details of the case; and although Mr. — came to me at Exeter after the decision, and said that if Mr. Fairchild's friends would now test satisfied, he thought the prosecution might be stopped, and that he should advise it; still I find this morning some of our best citizens earnest for a continuance." To depose me from the ministry on the testimony of a false witness, thus bringing disgrace upon my wife and children as dear to me as his own can be to him, and depriving me of the means of feeding and clothing them, did not satisfy Mr. Riddel. He must represent the Council as virtually unanimous in their sentence of condemnation, and the public as entirely so. Even this is not enough; but he plainly intimates a wish that I may be demanded by the civil authorities for a further prosecution. Why this anxiety to crush and destroy me? Had I ever done him any wrong? Had I been a disgrace to the ministry, on a standing in it of thirty years? Had the church received no benefit from my past services? I dare not trust myself to comment on such feelings and wishes, indulged by a minister of that gospel which enjoins mercy, forbearance and kindness, even to the guilty. Before he writes another such letter, would it not be well for him to read, and inwardly digest the 12th verse of the 7th chapter of Matthew? I must here state, for it is true, that in less than two weeks after this extract from his letter was published, he called on me at Saco, and kindly invited me to visit him whenever I came to Boston! I did not then even suspect him as the author of that letter. Who can blame me for exclaiming in the language of Job, "My brethren have dealt deceitfully as a brook."

give him the desired information. Accordingly, on the 22nd day of May, only one week from the time of my acquittal by the Referees, the deacon starts off with all speed to Mr Shailer's, some three miles distant, and there holds his first interview with him. What passed between them is best known to themselves. It seems, however from Mr. Shailer's testimony before the Council, that he then had his suspicions of some one, but not of me. Then the deacon disclosed to Mr. S. his suspicions that I was the man. After some further conversation, the deacon goes home, and returns again to Mr. S on the 29th of May in the evening, and there holds his second interview with Mr. S. On the 4th of June the deacon makes his third call, and requests Mr. S. to go to Taunton, where the girl was then residing, to see if she would make any disclosure. And as rumor, (so Mr. S. says,) had involved him in the matter, he thought it due to himself, to get her to reveal the whole affair. Mr. S. goes to Taunton for this purpose on the 5th of June, has a private interview with Rhoda, asks her to disclose the matter to him, tells her that the facts ought to come out, and that the cause of religion demanded it. He tells her further, that "people suspect Mr. Fairchild, and they will take him up on suspicion, and you will have to go to the Police Court, and swear to it; and therefore it will be better for you to disclose it at once." Was there no deception here? Is it possible for Mr. S. to be so ignorant of the law as not to know that such an occurrence could not have happened? Did he not know that the law compels no one to implicate himself? This was doubtless done to frighten her. But she said that she had done all she expected to do,—that she had taken an oath to say nothing on the subject, which she regarded as sacred. He then asked her "if she would clear Mr. Fairchild?" She replied, "I will not clear any one." He then began to talk to her about the money she was to receive, and told her there were individuals who would make up the amount to her. He then touched the right cord. The argument that the clearing him and the welfare of religion required a disclosure, it seems, had little weight. But when the payment of money was spoken of, there was in it a powerful charm. She concluded to go with him to Boston. Accordingly she takes the cars that afternoon in company with Mr. Shailer who pays her fare, goes directly to S. Boston, to see, as she says, her sister, and probably the deacons also,* returns that evening to Mr. Shailer's, makes her

* And yet the deacons would feign make the world believe that they had no connection with this transaction. Being apprehensive that I should introduce their treatment of me as a part of my defence before the Council, they sent to that Body a remonstrance, protesting against their hearing any such charge or imputation. Among other reasons which they assign, this is one. "Because we think it irrelevant to the case in hearing, which we understand to relate to charges brought by Rhoda Davidson, with which we do not consider ourselves connected, not having ever conversed with her or the principal witnesses in the case." Yes, these are the very words of the protest, signed, Josiah Vinton and Jeremy Drake. They here assert that they have no connection with Rhoda Davidson in the charges brought by her against me! Why, their hands, and feet, and tongues are plainly visible in every movement pertaining to this matter. Without them Mr. Shailer would not have gone to Taunton in search of Rhoda, or have promised her money to induce her to charge me with crime. This is evident from Mr. Shailer's testimony before the Council. At the time of deacon Drake's first interview with him, Mrs. Shailer was out of town, and she was to be inquired of by

disclosures, spends the night there, and returns the next day to Taunton. In the meantime a confidential letter which had been intrusted by Rhoda to Mr. S., and to which he had no more right than he had to my purse, was given by him to deacon Drake. Here then we see a Reverend clergyman of another denomination, at the instigation of a deacon of an Orthodox Church, to neither of whom was I in any wise responsible for my morals, threatening, and coaxing, and then *hiring* a girl to reveal a matter, which she had solemnly sworn before God to keep! And all this, they would have the world believe was for the glory of God and the good of the Church! Why, they have done more, by this one transaction, to wound the cause of religion and disgrace the ministry, than they will ever be able to atone for, should they live a thousand years.

But the climax in this affair is now to come. A few days after Rhoda had returned to the public house in Taunton, Mrs. Shailer called to see her, takes her into a private room, reads to her a paper drawn up by her husband, containing grave charges against me. This she carefully reads over to Rhoda, and when she had got her ready to sign it, Mrs. Robbins, the lady of the house, is called in to witness the signature. Of course Mrs. R. then became acquainted with what was going on, and very properly communicated the matter to her husband. Rhoda stated to Mr. Robbins that Mrs. Shailer wanted her to return directly to Boston with her; but she concluded for certain reasons, not to go till the next day. Mr. Robbins soon takes an opportunity to converse with Rhoda alone about the matter. He says to her, "Rhoda, what could induce you to do such a thing?" And after assigning several reasons why she should not have done it, he repeats the question, "What could have induced you to do so?" To which she replied: "*I am to have twice as much for*

her husband on her return, as to the particulars stated to him by the deacon. When the deacon made his second call on Mr. S. though his wife had returned, yet he seems not to have deemed the matter of such pressing importance as to have led him to say any thing further to her on the subject. The deacon again returns home evidently disappointed in not obtaining what he so anxiously desired. But when he goes to Mr. Shailer's the third time he had a plan contrived by which to *compel* Mr. S. to action. The deacon told him that rumor had involved him (Mr. S.) in the matter. Then the reverend gentleman thought, as he stated to the Council, that it was due to himself and society, to endeavor to ascertain the whole truth of the affair. Here we see deacon Drake goading on Mr. S. to get a disclosure from Rhoda Davidson; and among other arguments employed, telling him that if he declined doing so, he would probably have to father the child himself. And yet the deacon has the effrontery to tell a Christian Council *in writing* with his *own name attached*, that he did not consider himself at all connected with the charges brought against me by Rhoda Davidson! Whereas had it not been for him and his associates, it is as clear as the sun in a cloudless sky, that no such charges would ever have been made. And yet these men would have others believe them to be so very sanctimonious and holy, and so deeply concerned for the honor and purity of the ministry, as to start back with horror at the bare suspicion that a clergyman, totally disconnected from them, might have been guilty of impurity. The girl herself testified to the Council that she was *desired*, (she might have said *hired*) to reveal the affair, "because it would cause people not to think so hard of the deacons of the Church at S. Boston, who were suspicious of Mr. Fairchild upon some other affairs." And yet these same deacons affirm that they did not consider themselves at all connected with the matter, while they themselves, either personally or by their agents, were the moving cause and the instigators of the whole transaction! Surely it becomes those men to read and ponder well what the Savior says about the mote and the beam.

revealing as I should have had for keeping the secret." Mr. Robbins then said, "I don't believe a word of it. It is all a humbug, Rhoda." To which she replied: "*They have secured it to me.*" Mr. R. then inquired: "Who are they?" She replied, "*Mr. Shailer and the deacons. That's what I went to South Boston for with Mr. Shailer.*"

This statement of Mr. Robbins, which he says he is ready to make before any Council or Jury, cannot be disputed. He gave it freely and unsolicited, because, as he said, he believed me to be an innocent and injured man, having come to this conclusion from certain circumstances which passed under his own observation. And though an entire stranger to me, having never heard my name except from Rhoda, he *voluntarily* and *repeatedly* made this statement to different individuals. And I take this opportunity thus publicly to express to him my heart-felt gratitude for his aid in unfolding this iniquity. If the deacons and Mr. Shailer deny having promised and secured money to Rhoda in this manner, and thus discredit their own witness, it belongs not to me to complain. This surely is their affair and her affair, and not mine.*

Near the close of the public session of the Council, an incident occurred which it may be proper here to state. In reply to Mr. Adams, who had been testifying to his impressions,† I stated that Mr. A. had misap-

* I will here state that a portion of the evidence which it was proposed to introduce before the Council when in secret session, related to this very point. Several gentlemen arrived that morning from South Boston, with additional testimony in my favor; and among other things they were prepared to state to the Council that Mr. W. P. a member of the Phillips Church, and connected with deacon Drake's family by marriage, had said there was a paper in existence signed, as he understood, by the deacons and two or three others, to secure the payment of a certain sum of money to Rhoda Davidson; and although he had not seen the paper himself, yet a gentleman told him that he had seen it. The youngest son of deacon Drake has since been heard to say that this affair would cost five hundred dollars, and that his father would probably have to pay one hundred of it. And as two hundred and fifty dollars would have remained due to Mr. Davidson from me, if the affair had not been divulged, it seems rational to conclude that the sum of five hundred dollars had been secured to Rhoda, being, as she said to Mr. Robbins, twice as much as she would otherwise have received. I have since been informed that this money was not to be paid to Rhoda, except on condition that I was convicted. Thus the public will see what a powerful motive was pressing upon her to testify as she did before the Council.

† This testifying to impressions under oath, to deprive a man of his character, is, I believe, quite a new thing, whether in Councils or in Courts. And when Mr. Adams arose and was sworn to testify, the scene was most deeply interesting and solemn.—The stillness of death pervaded the crowded assembly. My own mind was in perfect suspense as to what he might state till it was uttered; and if Dr. Perry had testified to the same thing, I could not have been more surprised. I had previously affirmed to him and Mr. Riddel, in my parlor, as in the presence of God, with the judgment seat in view, and without any mental reservation whatever, that I never had any carnal connexion with Rhoda Davidson. But it seems I did not say it in such a manner as he would have said it, nor kneel down as he thought he should have done, therefore the impression on his mind was unfavorable. But different men have different ways of doing *the* same thing. I kneel to no being but my Maker. However, these strong impressions on Mr. A.'s mind produced strong impressions on the minds of others. Before he thus testified, the current of feeling was evidently in my favor. This was noticed by all. But that testifying, which was done in a manner so solemn and impressive, turned the tide against me, though no one could tell why, for it was not evidence. But the work was done. I was then just as well convinced of my fate as I was after the Result of Council was made known to me. And my only surprise

prehended me,—that I was not conscious of having done any thing to leave such an impression on his mind,—and that if he had misapprehended me *then*, he ought to be satisfied with what I had since affirmed. I then reminded him that a dying hour was an honest hour, and that I had asserted my innocence of the crimes charged against me to those around my bed, when neither they nor myself expected that I should live another hour. I added that I did not know that my veracity had ever been doubted. In a moment Mr. Riddel was on his feet, and said, “As the gentleman says that he is not aware that his veracity has ever been called in question, I beg leave to read a letter from deacon Simonds of the Phil-

was that there were so many as six members of the Council who remained firm, and determined not to convict on IMPRESSIONS, but on EVIDENCE. I have not conversed with a single individual who witnessed that transaction, who has not said that that one act, which was neither according to law or gospel, did more to convict me than all the testimony of my accusers. I do not say this to cast censure upon Mr. Adams. I state it because it is a fact,—an undisputed fact. Mr. A. was doubtless honest, in what he said and did. He believed me guilty on the girl's story, told in Boston, with no one to contradict or cross-question her. He probably did not then dream that she had been HIRED to tell what she did. And therefore, believing me guilty, he thought it right to take the course he did in order to impress a conviction of guilt on the minds of others. But I would ask Mr. A. whether it would not have been more in accordance with the spirit of the gospel and christian courtesy, if he had come to me and requested an explanation as to the impressions which I intended to leave on his mind? for those impressions were chiefly made in private at his house, and in a state of mind on my part, bordering on insanity. Before proclaiming to the Council and the world, the impressions thus made, it seems to me he should have first sought a private interview with me, to ascertain whether he might not possibly have received impressions which I never designed to make. But Mr. A., it would seem, came to the Council with his mind made up, and therefore all the false swearing of the principal witness against me, had no effect to change it. He heard her false statements—he must have known them to be false. But he evidently thought there was truth enough in her story to condemn me, notwithstanding. Whereas if a witness had been testifying against him, the moment I discovered her telling one palpable falsehood, I should have thrown her whole testimony to the winds, as unworthy of the least credit. Besides, Mr. A. thought that there was something in my letter which was a virtual acknowledgement of guilt, when the very first sentence in it is a direct denial of guilt. He thought, too, that I ought to have revealed to him the name of my friend who gave me the money, when I assured him that I was under the obligation of an oath not to do so. And if I had done it, I very much doubt whether ALL who wished me to do it, would have been half so lenient towards me as they were towards Rhoda, for violating her oath and promise. But I could not gratify him. If others think lightly of promises, I do not. The Bible says that a righteous man sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not. But I love Mr. Adams still. We have taken sweet counsel together, and deeply sympathized with each other. He was my chosen preacher at my installation in Exeter, and I do trust, that we shall yet meet in heaven, where he will be convinced, if not before, that his IMPRESSIONS were groundless. But while he remains in the flesh, and has around him a beloved wife and children, I do fervently pray that his character and standing in the ministry may never be taken from him by false witnesses, or by any one testifying to his own impressions. It did seem to me at the time that he was reserved by my prosecutors as the last witness against me, to render my acquittal by the Council hopeless. Whether so designed or not, such was the effect beyond all dispute. I think it due to Mr. Adams to state that the morning after he had been testifying to his impressions, he called on me. During our conversation he said, “I think I hurt *myself* more last evening, than I did *you*; and I now say to you, don't despond. If the Council should condemn you, and you are innocent, take courage. God will yet make a way for it to appear.” I then remarked, “Brother Adams, how *could* you have misapprehended me so?” He replied, “Well, I think that your declarations when you supposed yourself to be dying, ought to be set off against it.” And when he arose to go, the last words he uttered, as he closed the door, were, “Do write me, brother.”

lips Church." The letter was read: from which it appeared that deacon S. had received the impression that I had falsified the truth to him in a conversation with him a few weeks before I asked my dismissal from the church in South Boston. The circumstances were these. Mr. S. (for he was not then a deacon) who was at that time a warm friend of mine, saw me one day, and of his own accord, expressed his regret at certain treatment which I had received from the deacons a few evenings before in my study, where we had met to examine candidates for admission to the church. I replied that that was a trifle compared with other things they had done, and told him, *in perfect confidence*, that I should leave to get rid of them;—that if every man, woman, and child in the parish should request me to stay, I would not. And I left the impression on his mind that *he* was the only person who knew it. And when he came to learn that there was a previous understanding between the deacons and myself, that I was to leave about that time, he inferred that I must have lied to him. But the truth was, that I did not then know that the deacons and Mr. Howe knew that I was going to leave, for it depended on a contingency then unknown to me. They might have divulged the matter without my knowledge of it, although the probability was that they had not; for they were as desirous to get rid of me, as I was to get rid of them. They well knew that I was not going to leave if they had made an attack upon my character to any one; for in that case I should have remained and defended myself. But when my defence was over I was determined to leave, if every man, woman and child in the parish should request me to stay. This was a fact which the deacons did not know. For what peace or happiness could I have had with such men around me, on my right hand and on my left? I did not intend to deceive Mr. Simonds. My object in enjoining secrecy upon him was to prevent my people from knowing it, lest they should come to me and urge me to remain, and insist on knowing whether I had not other reasons for leaving than ill health; and as I was anxious to preserve the peace of the Church, whose union it had been my constant aim to promote, I wished to avoid all such inquiries, lest that peace should be destroyed. Thus it is evident that what I said was literally true, though he misapprehended me. This matter I explained to him a short time previous to the meeting of the Referees. He appeared to be entirely satisfied with my explanation. If he was not satisfied, why did he not bring up the matter before the Referees? He was present at all their sessions, but he opened not his lips on the subject. He might have done it, had he been so disposed. I thought his letter to the Council was, to say the least, very unkind and ungenerous. I could not help thinking of an interview between him and Mr. Dunbar, which took place in the month of March last. And I would ask Mr. Simonds whether he has forgotten the *secret* which Mr. Dunbar then intrusted to his keeping, with *unlimited confidence in his veracity*, and how soon that important secret came to Mr. Dunbar's ears from a person living half a mile in another direction? This circumstance contributed not a little to convince Mr. D. that there was a deep laid plot to destroy me, though at the ruin of his own family. I would further ask deacon S. whether the tongue of slander was never le

loose against him, and whether he ever knew me to give credit or currency to the slander? "They who live in glass houses should be careful how they throw stones."

I must now go back a little in my story. On the 19th of June, the very day of my derangement, the following letter, the original of which now lies before me, was written by Mr. Cranston Howe, directed *unpaid* to Rufus Sewell Esq. of Edgcomb.

BOSTON, JUNE 19th, 1844.

Sir:—Although I am an entire stranger to you, I take the liberty of addressing you upon a subject that has caused us much anxiety, and is producing great excitement here.

It is stated by Miss Rhoda Davidson. (whose parents reside in your town,) that she lived in the family of the Rev. Joy H. Fairchild, in the year 1840, and onward; and that she was seduced by him, and by whom she had an illegitimate child born in the month of September, 1842. At this time Mr. Fairchild was the Pastor of the Phillips Church, South Boston, of which church I was then, and now am a member. About this time the deacons of said church, myself, and some others, entertained strong suspicions against the moral and religious character of Mr. Fairchild, stated the grounds of our suspicions to him, upon which he agreed to resign his office as Pastor of Phillips Church, and leave South Boston, if we would keep the grounds of our suspicions secret. Having no positive proof in the case, we agreed to do so. Mr. Fairchild left as he agreed, and has since been settled in Exeter, N. H. One event has followed another, until the Providence of God has brought to light this new matter. Miss Rhoda Davidson made a full confession of all the circumstances to the Rev. Mr. Shailer, a Baptist clergyman residing in the town of Brookline, near Boston, with whom she had formerly lived. The circumstances are very aggravated; he using arguments from the Bible to accomplish his purpose, and to justify his conduct. She states he continued his illicit intercourse with her for nearly two years. When he found that she was in the family way, he gave her one hundred dollars and sent her home, and agreed, if she would keep the matter secret and shield him from all suspicion, he would pay fifty dollars per annum, till the sum of five hundred dollars was paid. Mrs. Mary Easty, Rhoda's sister, was present when this arrangement was made. She says that Mr. Fairchild acknowledged that he had had intercourse with Rhoda, and that if her situation was as they feared, he would do all he could for her if they would keep it secret.

Rhoda has also put an anonymous letter into our hands, in which he virtually acknowledges the fact. In this letter he speaks of an interview with Rhoda's father,—of an agreement to pay money,—of their solemn oath and promise to save him from all suspicion, &c.

The matter has been communicated to Mr. Fairchild. He acknowledges himself the author of that letter, and says that he has paid the sum of two hundred dollars, not that he is guilty, but to prevent their injuring his character; they having conspired together to extort money from him.

I have thus given you a general view of the whole subject. And the object of my writing you is to request you to see Mr. William Davidson, Rhoda's father, upon the subject, and ascertain all the facts in the case. I wish a statement of all the circumstances over his own signature, together with such further information as you may be able to give. This I think due to Mr. Davidson, to Rhoda his daughter, and to the cause of morality and religion. If you will give this subject your immediate attention, and write me at the earliest opportunity, you will aid the cause of the oppressed, of betrayed innocence, and much oblige

Your Obedt Serv't,

CRANSTON HOWE.

RUFUS SEWELL Esq.

P. S. A friend of mine wrote to the Post Master at Edgcomb upon this subject.—He did not know his name and had no acquaintance with him. Will you see him, and have the matter managed PRUDENTLY. The letter was directed, Post Master, Edgcomb, Lincoln County, South Post Office, Maine.*

*The letter referred to in this postscript was read to Mr. Davidson by the Post Master, and Mr. D. replied that he had nothing to say about the matter, only that his daughters had acted very foolishly. The next day he went to sea. If he believed that I was the

I should like, had I time and space, to give this letter a critical examination. But I must allow the reader to examine the *letter*, while I proceed to examine the *writer*. In the meantime there are some things in it which I cannot wholly pass unnoticed. The spirit which dictated it and the object to be accomplished by it, all must see. Had it been simply a letter of inquiry, with an honest desire to get at the truth, why this attempt to blacken my character by a narration of circumstances which had been pronounced by the Referees, as giving no just cause for casting imputations on my moral and ministerial character? The letter is chiefly valuable to me on account of its admissions. Mr. Howe admits that he and the deacons agreed to keep the grounds of their suspicions secret, on condition that I would resign my office. I did resign. But their grounds of suspicion notwithstanding, were made public, and ultimately came out in the form of a Circular. He admits that I was to pay fifty dollars a year till the sum of five hundred dollars was paid.—Rhoda testified before the Council that I was to pay ninety dollars a year indefinitely.

But I have much more to do with the *writer* than with the *letter*.—And who is Cranston Howe? I wonder what arguments *he* used to accomplish *his* purpose before marriage? Or was it so easily accomplished as to require no arguments at all? When some of his former customers suspected that he had not dealt honestly with them, I wonder what arguments he employed to convince them of their mistake. What arguments did he employ to the mother of his partner in trade, who committed suicide, to convince *her* that the death of her son was not occasioned by his unkind treatment of him? Has he forgotten the letter which the young man left behind, or the letter which his mother wrote him soon after the untimely death of her son? If *he* has forgotten, *I* have not. Has he forgotten that he told his neighbor Mr. P. soon after the meeting of the Referees, that nobody believed Mrs. Dunbar guilty? Why then does he write such a letter, in which he virtually says that she *is* guilty?

The above letter was read by Mr. Sewell to the mother of Rhoda.—On the 29th of June Rhoda writes to her mother, whose letter is now before me, and from which I will quote an extract or two. "I want you, mother, to feel that I am surrounded by friends, who will not desert me so long as I contend for breath. Be ready to see any one who may come to see you about this, and don't misrepresent any thing that I have told you about my lovers, because you might misconstrue something to my disadvantage." These letters, and especially Mr. Howe's, were admirably adapted, and undoubtedly designed to forestall the opinion of the mother, and to prejudice her mind against me. But there was a failure here. For if the mother had been convinced that I was such a man as Mr. H. represents me to be, and Rhoda as pure and virtuous as he would have the mother believe, how came it to pass that she expressed an opin-

father of Rhoda's child, why did he not dictate a letter to that effect? If the writer of that letter had only promised to *double* the amount of money which he expected to receive from me, as has since been promised to Rhoda, he might possibly have obtained the desired information, and detained Mr. D. at home to protect his daughters.

ion directly the reverse? She well knew her daughter; and though she had the feelings of a mother, yet conscience and a regard to truth compelled her to say what she did in her depositions. No undue influence was used, as some have supposed, to have her testify in my favor. Indeed, her feelings from the beginning were wholly on my side, so much so that she discovered an unwillingness to speak on the subject to Mr. Folsom, until she was satisfied he was my friend. She then communicated freely and of her own accord what was written down from her lips by Mr. F. and made oath to by her in the presence of T. W. Chadbourn, Justice of the Peace. The following is a portion of her second deposition: "I have said, and now say, that as much as Rhoda disgraced herself by being the mother of said child, she has, in my opinion, disgraced herself still more by the statements which I understand she has made relative to Mr. Fairchild. I am constrained to say that I have the strongest fears that my said daughter Rhoda is in the hands of bad advisers, and that under such circumstances she has said and done that which is decidedly wrong and untrue. I know that under the pretence of friendship and worldly advantage, she could be very easily influenced to do wrong, when instigated to do so by men who would have her believe them to be her friends. Rhoda brought home with her in May 1842, the sum of forty-two dollars, and no more that I know of. What she did with the money which she received in Boston, beside that sum, is unknown to me, except the payment of her fare and expenses here, which I understood was about eight dollars. She came home at that time more poorly clad, and with less clothing than usual, and without the least preparation for her confinement. My husband asked Rhoda what she had done with the other fifty dollars, and Rhoda said that she had brought home all that she had left. Mr. Davidson reckoned up her expenses and bills, and could not account for the deficiency. Rhoda concluded that she must have lost it. Rhoda has told me that when she left Mr. Fairchild's house, (left living there,) she went directly to Mr. Chapin's in Abington. I have often heard Rhoda say that Mr. Fairchild was an excellent man, and a true christian. I heard Mr. Davidson ask Rhoda how many times she had had intercourse with the father of her child, and she replied, but *once*, and that was by great persuasion, if not by force." Such is the mother's deposition, given under the sanction of an oath. And all this, be it remembered, she solemnly affirms, after having read the letter of Mr. Howe and of her daughter.

But this letter was not enough to satisfy Mr. Howe. In July or August he writes another letter to Mr. Sewell, requesting him to get access to Mr. Davidson, as soon as he returned from his fishing voyage, and obtain from him his story. He landed at midnight on Saturday, and before the Sabbath was gone, Mr. Sewell was with him. But this is not all.—I am told that when the vessel put in at the Gut of Canso, away off in the British dominions, a gentleman goes on board with a Report of my trial before the Council, and has an interview with him alone. What passed between them may be easily inferred.

And now, as I am informed, the plan is to get the father to sustain Mrs. Easty's testimony, that while I denied the paternity of the child, I

admitted the intercourse—a distinction which I never thought of, till others had made it for me. Is it possible that I should admit *that*, which would have been as fatal to my character as what I denied, and which I must have known might have been used against me at some future day ! If I were guilty, I *need* not have admitted it ; if innocent, I *could* not. But this plan will not avail them. Mr. Samuel Merry, a near neighbor of Mr. Davidson, deposes and says “ that when at work with Mr. D. at Boothbay in the summer of 1843, Mr. D. said to him that after Rhoda’s child was born, he went to Boston and saw the man that Rhoda said was the father of her child, and told him that Rhoda had laid the child to him ; and that the man upon hearing this appeared to be amazed, and utterly denied being the father of the child, and said it could not be.” Now surely if I had made any such admission to him as is pretended, would he not have stated the fact to Mr. Merry ? Nothing could have been more natural. But he says nothing like it to Mr. Merry. And Mr. D. cannot say it under oath without perjury. He *knows* that no such admission was made, and no such question asked me. Neither he nor I thought at the time of any such distinction as has since been contrived by my enemies. He well knows that my statement before the Council published in the Report of my trial, of my interview with him is strictly true, and that if he departs from it to save his daughter, he does it at the expense of a perjured soul. If I had made any such admission, how could he go home and tell his wife what she testified he did in her first deposition ! She there affirms under oath that her husband told her “ that the man, (meaning me) positively and solemnly denied all knowledge of her (Rhoda,) or of being the father of her child.” Since his return from fishing, he has said to a neighbor that I am a fine man and that he pitied me. What, a fine man after having ruined his daughter as is charged upon me ! Could he have said this, if he really believed that I had seduced her ?* Besides, he says to his neighbor Merry, that “ the father of the

* Mrs. Randall testified in her deposition before the Council that Mr. Davidson said to her, (and this she says was AFTER the birth of Rhoda’s child) “ he regretted that Rhoda had ever left Mr. F.’s as she had not done so well since, and spoke very kindly of Mr. F.” One would think it utterly impossible for a father to use such language as this in reference to a man whom he really regarded as the seducer of his daughter.

While writing this note I will take the opportunity to state here that recommendations were read to the Council to prove that Rhoda was a good girl when she came into my family. But Mrs. Randall’s deposition proved that she came into my family a liar. Before we had ever seen her at all, she inquires of Mrs. R. for a boarding place and says “ that she had been boarding in Marblehead three or six months.” Whereas she was never in Marblehead at all ! Soon after this she told Mrs. R. that she was boarding at Mr. Fairchild’s. It has also been urged to my disadvantage that I gave her a recommendation when she left my house at the close of the first year. And why should I not give her such a paper ? She had behaved well, so far as we had noticed, for the first 6 or 8 months, with the exception of those improprieties which we attributed to disappointment in her love affairs. And as the young man with whom she was in love, was then married or about to be, we naturally concluded that that event would calm her mind, and that she would do as well as she did at first. And how unkind it would have been in me, to have refused her a recommendation for such a cause ? Her character was her all ; and I was not the man to take it from her without some more substantial reason. Besides, she might have been licentious all this time, without our knowledge. We had no young men living with us, nor did such come to see her. She told Mrs. R. that Mr. Ellis would not come to see her at my house, and that she went else-

child was not a minister, neither was he a professor of religion, nor a doctor, but he was nearer a doctor than a minister."* And yet he came to me, who was a minister, and demanded money of me. Now what is this in the view of honesty and common sense?

Indeed, the whole affair, on their part, seems to be nothing else but a money-making concern. Mrs. Easty, at the beginning, sent Rhoda to me for money; she came and demanded two hundred dollars; I yielded, for reasons already stated, one half of which I paid her then, and promised the other half at some future day, and all on the express and sole condition that she would not lie about me to others, and thus destroy my character, ruin my family, and bring reproach on the ministry and the church. I gave Mrs. Easty at the time ten dollars, who said that she ought to have something for keeping the secret, and she acknowledged to the Council that Rhoda also gave her ten. What became of the remaining forty, which Rhoda left behind when she went home, may easily be conjectured. Though she told her father she must have lost a portion of it, yet it is possible, to say the least, that Mrs. E. might have been the finder. Then the father comes and demands fifty dollars a year for six years, and goes home and tells his neighbor Merry that though the "father of the child was not a minister, yet he had done as well as he expected; that he was not at all disappointed, and that he had received what he had, and should receive more if the man had his health," &c. By the disclosure Mr. D. has, of course, no further claim on me for money. But if Rhoda's amount has been *doubled* as she stated to Mr. Robbins, who can doubt the readiness with which certain persons would *double* the amount to

where to meet him. She might have gone to see others elsewhere without our knowledge. Where she was Thursday afternoons and evenings and on Sabbath days, and many evenings of the week, or with whom she then associated we did not know. Besides, if at that time she had been seduced by me as she pretends, why did I object to her spending a few days at my house after Mrs. Fairchild had gone her journey, as was testified by Miss Towne? If what she has said had been true, one would think, that she would have demanded of me a home for a few days, yea, and money too to pay for her board somewhere, while she was learning a trade, as she then proposed to do. And I can prove that she said to more than one at the time that she gave up learning a trade because she was destitute of money to pay for her board and clothes. All this surely does not look much like the conduct of a seduced girl towards her seducer. Besides, if I was deceived in giving her a recommendation, might not others have been deceived in likemanner?

In the course of my trial at Exeter, recommendations were read to the Council from different individuals, speaking in high terms of Rhoda Davidson. Among others there was one from Miss Roby, a milliner, in whose shop Rhoda remained about a week. A female of undoubted veracity has just informed me that she heard this same Miss Roby speak of Rhoda since my trial, and that she expressed her opinion of her in the following terms, "I did not like her appearance very soon after she came to me, and thought she was not what she ought to be. She appeared to me like one whose character was not good, and I was very glad when she could not obtain another boarding place. She called once after she left, and I then hoped that she would never come into the store again." Miss Roby also said that her business was such as to lead her to form an acquaintance with many young females, and that she thought herself well qualified to judge as to their character.

* I have now before me the deposition of Mr. Amos S. Hagget, a neighbor of Mr. Davidson, and signed in the presence of T. W. Chadbourn, Justice of the Peace. Mr. Hagget deposes and says: "I asked him (Davidson) if the father of Rhoda's child was a minister and he said he was not."

her father, if their darling object could thereby be attained? Were there ever before three witnesses more deeply interested in their own case, and under stronger inducement to testify falsely? They well know the position in which they will be placed, if I am acquitted. And yet *they* are to testify, while I must remain silent, because I am under a powerful temptation to swear falsely, while it is as clear as day that their temptation to do so, is far more powerful. But I hope soon to be ready to meet them, and to submit my case to the decision of a jury.

My readers must now excuse me if I introduce to their acquaintance the Dunhams. When the two brethren, (Messrs. Getchell and Odlin) went to South Boston to converse with the deacons on the subject of the Circular, they had a conversation with Josiah Dunham in the presence of his wife who seemed heartily to respond to the sayings of her husband. The following paper, written and signed by the above named gentlemen, was read to the Council at the time of my trial.

"Sometime in April last, in company with Woodbridge Odlin, I called at the house of Josiah Dunham, in South Boston for the purpose of ascertaining what Mr. Dunham would say in relation to an anonymous Circular, which had been distributed, defamatory to the character of the Rev. Mr. Fairchild.

Mr. Dunham without any hesitation denied all knowledge of the Circular; both in respect to its author, origin, or publication. He said, Mr. Fairchild was a rascal and a villain and he could prove it. 'He is as big a rascal as ever wore a black coat; and I will leave no stone unturned until I get him out of the pulpit. Down with him and tell what I say everywhere.' And, 'if he had done as much to you as he has done to me and my family, you would dislike him as much as I do.' He then referred to the difficulties existing between his son and wife. Much was said and repeated of the above character; all of which cannot be remembered at the present time; from which I inferred a settled determination in the mind of Dunham to do all in his power to the injury of Mr. Fairchild.

JOSHUA GETCHELL.

I certify to the truth of the foregoing; and will add that much more was said by Mr. Dunham of the same character. It is impossible however to call to mind at this hour the various expressions made to us by him. My object was, more particularly to ascertain the feelings which Dunham cherished toward Mr. Fairchild, and learn the source of the calumnious Circular. I was led to infer from this conversation that Dunham was the determined foe of Mr. Fairchild; and although he denied all knowledge of the Circular, he yet voluntarily made charges of a character equally severe.

EXETER, JULY 24, 1844.

WOODBIDGE ODLIN.

And what had I done to Mr. D. or his family to merit all these hard names? I must here give a little account of my connection with that family. After I had accepted the call to settle in South Boston, Nov. 1827, I went there with my family a week or two before my installation, and put up, as I was requested to do, at Mr. Dunham's, either at his own expense or that of the Church. As soon as my furniture arrived from Connecticut, I commenced house-keeping. As Mr. D. refused at the time to receive any compensation for my board, the Church presented him a vote of thanks for his kindness and hospitality. With this he appeared highly gratified. My boarding there a week or two was altogether an affair of the Church, and as I supposed, to be paid for by them, if any payment was demanded, and not by me. But recently I have been informed that he has spoken to more than one of his boarding me at that time without his charging me a cent, as though there was a meanness, or a want of gratitude in me not to pay him. Whereas, had I offered to do

it at that time, he would doubtless have been highly offended; for he was then ready, and during many years afterwards, as he has often said, to divide his last loaf with me.

I had no special difficulty with that family, as I now recollect, till the year 1838. Soon after the explosion of the Franklin Bank, which took place under the administration of Dunham as President and Hathorne as Cashier, about one year after deacon Drake had been turned out of the cashiership, there were some hard feelings, as I was told, indulged towards me by Mrs. Dunham. The occasion was this. The blow-up of the Bank gave Dunham great distress. He groaned, and cried, and prayed, and at times rolled on the floor, and was truly an object of pity. He requested the prayers of Christians who called to see him. He instituted family worship, and had grace at his table. And it did seem as though his troubles were leading him to repentance, and a new life. Mrs. Dunham, not thinking perhaps that there was any difference between godly sorrow for sin, and the sorrow of the world, regarded these things in her husband as evidences of conversion. She soon expressed to me her desire that I would converse often with her husband, and intimated to me that it might be advisable to encourage him to join the Church. I said to her "Madam, your husband I hope, is an altered man, and that his repentance will prove genuine. But it will not do to admit him into the Church under existing circumstances. Public opinion accuses him of fraud in his management of the Bank, and though I trust the accusation is groundless, yet if I were to receive him to the communion table, those who deem him guilty would think that we had a strange Church, and might call it a cage for unclean birds. Wait awhile, and if he comes out clear from the stigma now resting upon him, and his repentance proves sincere and lasting, then I will encourage his making a profession with all my heart." This, I believe was the commencement of unkind feelings in that family towards me.

In the midst of his troubles in relation to the Bank, Mr. Dunham was in great fear lest he should be convicted of fraud, and be sentenced to the State Prison; and this fear probably gave him more distress than any thing else. When the General Court was in session, they appointed a Committee to look into the affairs of the Bank, and Mr. D. entreated me to see that Committee and use whatever influence I had in his behalf.—Accordingly I did see two members of that Committee, in a private room adjoining the Senate Chamber, said all that I could in his favor, attributing what was wrong in his management of the affairs of the Bank, partly to his own ignorance, and partly to the deception practised upon him, as I then thought, by the Cashier.

My own influence, with that of other friends, and especially the fact to which he afterwards gave oath, that he could neither read nor write, except his own name, enabled him to escape an indictment for defrauding the Bank. I do hope that the stockholders who lost their all, and the billholders who did not fare much better, will forgive me this wrong; for it was done ignorantly and through misapprehension. I did really believe at the time that Mr. D. was more sinned against than sinning. Had I known as much of him *then* as I do *now*, my conscience would never have

allowed me to plead for him as I did. However, he has since paid me for it; and the spirit which he now manifests towards me, is convincing proof to my mind that he would gladly get me *into* that prison, *out of* which I strove to keep him.*

But the line of demarkation between myself and the Dunhams was not distinctly drawn till the autumn of 1841. At that time there was a serious difficulty existing between the youngest son of Mr. Dunham and his wife. I suffered this matter to pass for some time, unnoticed; but as they were both members of my church, I felt it a christian duty at last to interfere, and to do what I could amicably to settle it. I deemed the attainment of my object utterly hopeless, unless I could first interest the mother of Mr. D. in favor of his wife, having had the impression that the mother was opposed to the match from the beginning. This impression, together with my knowledge of Mrs. D.'s peculiar disposition, caused me to enter upon my task with very little hope of success. But a conviction of duty was paramount to all other considerations. Accordingly I had a long interview with the mother, and endeavored to convince her that it was her duty, and the duty of her husband, as well as my own, to exert all our influence to keep that couple together, and thus to avoid those disastrous consequences which must follow a separation. But my efforts were fruitless. She was for a separation, and said that the sooner it took place, the better. It did take place; and the means employed for its accomplishment are well known to the public. And as I presumed to differ from them in regard to this matter, and refused to join them in sustaining their son in a course which I deemed wholly wrong; as I ventured to decide in favor of the injured wife, and to express my firm conviction that she was not guilty of the crime alleged against her, the full torrent of their wrath and abuse has been poured out upon my head ever since. But it seems that I was not alone in my opinion, for it was soon confirmed by the decision of Chief Justice Shaw and Judge Wilde. And surely I need not be ashamed of coinciding in opinion with such men, on a point like this. This, I suppose, is the injury I had done his family, to which he referred in his furious and calumnious attack upon my character in the presence of Messrs. Getchell and Odlin.†

But who are Mr. and Mrs. Dunham that they should be so ready and anxious to blacken the character of their former pastor? By what authority do they assume the office of public censors? Have they forgotten the circumstances of their marriage. Do they remember whether or not

* As a further proof of Dunham's hostility to me, I would mention what has been repeatedly told to me, that on the day when Rhoda Davidson's testimony was published in the Mail, he bought five hundred copies, and caused them to be gratuitously distributed among the families in South Boston.

† It is worthy of note here, that the deacons and Mr. Howe sided with the Dunhams in this matter. Deacon Drake had formerly been turned out of office as Cashier of the Franklin Bank, through the influence, as he thought, of Dunham, which occasioned much heart burning, and many bitter words. But now it would seem that all past differences are healed. In their attempts to ruin me they can join hands and work together in perfect harmony. It is recorded that on a particular occasion, and for a particular object, "Herod and Pilate became friends."

the first wife was then living, and whether or not the second wife became a mother long before the proper time? Do they remember whether or not the first wife was left to die in the alms-house! But I forbear. I am unwilling to go into a detail of such things. It must be as offensive to the public taste as it is to my own. And I should have made no such allusions, had it not been necessary, in order to let the world know who the persons are that thus conspire against me. If my allusions here are deemed incredible, I would refer the reader for information to Mr. Edwards of Cambridge Port, who was formerly in company with Mr. Dunham, and who probably knows as much about these affairs, and some others, as any man now living.

That the public may more clearly discern the persecuting spirit with which my enemies have pursued me, I must here state that as soon as deacon Drake had succeeded in obtaining Rhoda Davidson's story, an attachment was levied on my house in South Boston, for twelve hundred dollars, just double the amount which was even pretended to be due. To make this matter plain, I must go a little into detail. When I received my call from Newburyport, some of my parishioners, as an inducement for me to remain among them, proposed to build me a dwelling-house, in part at their own expense, to be regarded as virtually the property of my wife and children, to shelter them as a home, in case death should remove me from my labors. I remained, and the house was built. One of the two gentlemen who were my most liberal benefactors in this matter called on me about the time I commenced residing in the new house, and suggested the propriety of my giving them a bond obligating myself to refund to them what they had given, in case I should receive a call from a wealthier church, and the offer of a larger salary, and feel it my duty to accept. On this suggestion I immediately sat down and wrote an obligation. I cannot state the precise time, as the copy which I retained is not dated; but as I removed into the house in August, 1834, it was undoubtedly given about that time. I subjoin a literal copy of the original.

"Soon after I received an invitation from the First Presbyterian Church in Newburyport to become their pastor, certain individuals of my parishioners in this place assured me if I would remain among them as their minister, they would assist me to the amount of several hundred dollars in erecting a new house. Among these individuals are Ebenezer Hayward and Jacob Pike. These gentlemen have very kindly given me each six hundred dollars, on condition that I remain the pastor of this church. And I hereby promise that if I ever ask a dismission to become the pastor of any other church, or voluntarily leave my present station to occupy another either as pastor or teacher, I will refund to the above named gentlemen six hundred dollars each. But it is distinctly understood that nothing is to be refunded in case I am taken off from my labors by sickness, or infirmity or death.

J. H. FAIRCHILD.

In June, 1836, two years after the above obligation was given, Jacob Pike deceased. Deacon Drake administered on the estate, either as the appointed administrator, or as Mrs. Pike's attorney. At any rate, all accounts passed through his hands for settlement. The estate was settled and closed years ago. But as soon as the deacon had obtained Rhoda's statement and my letter, he goes to his neighbor, Mr. Jenney, with whom I had recently exchanged houses, and inquires of him whether there had been an exchange of deeds, adding that there was to be an attachment

levied on my house, and he wanted to know which house to attach. Either then, or in a subsequent conversation, he said to Mr. Jenney. "Perhaps you think that we have dealt hardly by Mr. Fairchild, but you will find out by and by that we had reason for doing what we have done," or words to that effect. The plan adopted to levy the attachment, as I was informed by Mr. William Aiken, a member in good standing of the Phillips Church, was this. Mr. Rackliff, who married Mr. Pike's only daughter, told him (Aiken) that Mr. Dunham or his son-in-law, Barker Kent, came to him to ascertain where my obligation was which I gave to his father Pike, and said to him that if he would get that obligation and give it to him, he would commence a suit against me for six hundred dollars, provided that he, (Rackliff) would give him one hundred of it if he succeeded, whereas if he failed he would ask nothing. So the bargain was closed,—a suit commenced by attaching my house in the name of Mrs. Pike, (mark, the deacon and Dunham are snugly concealed behind the curtain here,) and the writ made returnable to the court in Essex county, where it has since been entered, to be prosecuted, as I have been informed, by Dunham's lawyers, Messrs. Minot and Homer.*

Here then is a most unjust and vexatious suit commenced against me in a matter where there is not even the shadow of a claim either in law or equity. The obligation, on the very face of it, asserts that there is no such claim. My letter of resignation, the votes of the Phillips Church, and the doings of the Council that dismissed me, all concur in giving testimony to the same fact. Mr. Hayward, the joint partner in the matter of that obligation, says he has no more claim upon me to refund him six hundred dollars, or even one cent, than he has on any other man, and that the suit was commenced in his name, (for his name is in the writ,) without his knowledge or consent. I have since been compelled to sell my house, and this attachment put me to a good deal of inconvenience and expense, as does also the suit commenced against me in the Essex County Court, of which I had no previous information, and which came to my knowledge by mere accident. And in that court the suit now stands recorded to be prosecuted at the next term.

Now I ask any candid man whether this be not an act of persecution? Neither the Deacon nor the Dunhams had ever given me one single penny towards paying for my house. Neither had I any notice that a debt was due from me to the estate of Jacob Pike. Why not write me a let-

* And yet Mr. Dunham sent a paper to the Council, taken, if I remember correctly, in the form of a deposition, denying that he had any thing to do with the attachment on my house! The man who can swear to that, must, one would think, have quite an easy conscience.

There is one thing in Dunham's history which always struck me rather queerly. Whenever he was telling me any thing which appeared incredible, and to which I seemed not to give a ready assent, he would generally close by saying, "Ask Homes and Homer. They will tell you whether I speak the truth or not." Such a constant reference to these gentlemen to confirm the truth of what he said, tended rather to excite distrust than otherwise. However, if these excellent men are willing to be thus referred to as indorsers of Dunham's statements, it is surely no concern of mine. I have business enough of my own to attend to, without meddling with theirs.

ter making a demand for six hundred dollars, that I might pay it, if due, without the expense of a law suit? Or why did not Deacon Drake make the demand two years previous, when I asked my dismissal? If due at all, it was due then. But no; he must wait till he thought my character was ruined, and then goes to his neighbor Jenney to ascertain which house to attach, thus commencing the work of destruction on my property, which in one sense was not mine; for it was originally given me to shelter my wife and children, when they could no longer have a husband and a father to provide for them a home.*

* Soon after the death of Mr. Pike, I was informed that the widow was going to remove to Newburyport, and the daughter to remain in Boston. In a conversation on the subject with Mrs. Fairchild, she proposed to me to invite this daughter to pass a year or more with us, as an expression of gratitude on our part for the kindness shown us by her father. I made the proposal to her; she thanked me kindly, and said that she would consult her mother. She soon after called and told me her mother had concluded to remain in Boston, and of course she should remain in the family with her. This daughter has since married Mr. Rackliff, a respectable citizen of South Boston. About the time of Rhoda's disclosure, deacon Drake went to Mrs. Rackliff to inquire whether I had not made some sinful proposal to her before her marriage: She replied, NEVER; and that she regarded the proposal I *did* make as an act of kindness shown her, in consequence of her father's friendship for me. The substance of this she expressed in a letter which was read to the Council, but which has not been returned to me, otherwise I should publish it. The deacon probably did not say in this case as he did in the other, how anxious he was to prove me innocent; for he was evidently disappointed. Soon after this, Mr. Houghton, a member of the Church, went to see the husband of Mrs. Rackliff and "tried to convince him that Mr. F. (meaning me) *had* made a sinful proposal to her, and she had forgotten it; and Mr. H. wanted to Mr. R. to say that it was so; but he would not,—that he never understood it so from his wife, and should say no such thing." This statement I quote from a letter before me, as made by Mrs. Rackliff to Mr. and Mrs. Trumbull worthy members of the Essex Street Church. And to show further the spirit deacon Drake manifests to my friends as well as to me, he said to the same Mr. T. in a conversation he had with him respecting this case, "that Mrs. T. had better correct some of her misstatements and mind her own business, unless she is one of Mr. F.'s ladies." So it seems that a female friend, who presumes to speak a word in my favor, must do it at the hazard of a blast upon her character! In a recent conversation with a worthy female member of the Church about my case, she spoke to the deacon respecting my general manner and deportment towards the ladies of my Church and congregation, that I was uncommonly reserved and dignified in their company, so much so as to excite observation and remark. He admitted the fact, but, denied the inference. He said it was done to avoid suspicion, that I might the better accomplish my iniquity.

I will add here another specimen of the deacon's spirit towards me. He inquired of a gentleman, soon after the meeting of the Referees, whether the crime of adultery was not a State's Prison offence. The gentleman replied that it was. Then says the deacon in the most exulting manner, "Ah! we have got Fairchild now: he can't get clear of this!" Even if it were true, one would think that a Christian would weep, rather than exult over the fall of a clergyman under whose ministry he had sat for more than fourteen years. Soon after this, in a conversation with a young gentleman, (Mr. J.) relative to my illness, who spoke of it as an evidence of my innocence, that I then denied the charge, and left my forgiveness to my enemies, and prayed to God to forgive them; and then asked the deacon how it was possible for me to do so, if I were guilty? O, says the deacon, "he is bad enough to do any thing." And deacon Vinton has said in speaking of my derangement and attempt at suicide, that I was not crazy; that I knew just how far to cut and not kill myself, and that it was all for effect, to excite the public sympathy. One thing is very certain, that no sympathy was excited in his bosom. I have been credibly informed that Mr. Dunham accidentally fell in company with a female who once lived in my family a few weeks, and asked her if I did not attempt to take liberties with her, when she lived with us? She replied, no, and said that I always treated her kindly. He seemed to doubt her word, and said that he did not believe that I ever let any body go by that had petticoats on. These are only a sample of the means employed to ruin my character.

I have not yet done with deacon Drake, though doubtless my readers wish that I had. But they must have patience with me a little longer; for I am in no sense the aggressor in this matter, but simply a self-defender. And is there any thing more to be adduced against me by the deacon? Yes; I am told that he says if I am acquitted by a jury in this affair, he has enough more evidence to convict me. He accuses me of obtaining money from some gentlemen in Boston, (not from *him*) under false pretences; that while I was professedly begging for the Meeting-house, the Organ, the Clock, and my journey, I was begging for myself, to pay off the mortgage on my house. And where is his proof of this grave charge? He obtains it he thinks in this way. After my friends had given me for my house all that they agreed to give, two thousand dollars remained for me to pay. Accordingly I loaned the money of Mr. John Bird, with the permission of indorsing on the note semi-annually, whatever sum I might be able to do but not less than one hundred dollars at a time. Soon after this loan, Mr. Bird met with an accident which proved fatal. Capt Stephen Glover had the settlement of his estate. Of course my note went into his hands, and to him I made my payments. And from 1834 to 1842 I was enabled to take up my mortgage. This was done chiefly by the aid of my friends in the city. I had become acquainted with many gentlemen of wealth and generosity, some of whom seemed to take an interest in me both as a man and a minister, and to whom I made known my circumstances as to my house, how much was given to me at first and for what object, and how much still remained unpaid. Some gave me money expressly for my family in payment of the mortgage on my house. A certain gentleman gave me one time six hundred dollars for that object, while others gave me smaller sums. I have sometimes received money by letter without name or date, and know not to this day to whom I am indebted. I made the last payment just before I went my journey, with money which was given to my wife expressly for that purpose, and which she urged me to take to aid me in my journey, but which I did not feel authorized to do, lest, if I never returned, she should be embarrassed by a debt upon the house, which the original donors designed especially for her and the children, when they first proposed the plan of building, and which I had constantly kept in view till the debt was paid. I supposed that all my parishioners well understood the matter; for I had said to them more than once from the pulpit, that all the property I had in the world, was invested chiefly through the aid of friends, in that house, and all I wished to leave behind me, was that house paid for, as an inheritance to my family. I recollect making a statement of the circumstances under which my house was built, on one occasion when riding with Amos Lawrence, Esq (a name which I can never mention without emotions of gratitude too big for utterance;) and yet no individual more generously aided me in the expenses of my journey, and who, I presume, never dreamed that I was deceiving him with regard to my pecuniary affairs. And if any gentleman who gave me money for my journey has since dreamed so, or been made to believe so, it has been owing entirely to a misapprehension of the case. Not an individual gave me a single dollar for my journey, to whom I should not have

been perfectly willing at the time, to have given a true statement of all the circumstances with regard to the house. It is true that the house was *legally* mine, but *virtually* as I have already said, belonging to my family. From the kindness which I had formerly experienced when begging for my Church, I presumed that equal kindness would be shown me, when begging for myself. For I was, at that time, in a very weak and feeble state, going, as was my first calculation, to Europe, though afterwards relinquished, uncertain whether I should live to return, my salary about to cease, and my parishioners who were friendly, generally unable to do much for me.* Under these circumstances I thought that

* During the month of December 1841, my health was uncommonly feeble. I had a difficulty in my back and kidneys, which gave me much pain, made it quite uncomfortable for me to ride or walk and caused me, when sitting in the pulpit on three successive Sabbaths to place the preacher's cloak on the sofa behind my back to render my position less painful. And yet, if Rhoda Davidson is to be credited, it was during this very month, and in this very state of feebleness and pain, with the recent attack of the deacons fresh in my memory, that she came to my house and had quite a struggle with me to prevent my having my way with her, and at length after a quite a squabble, I succeeded, although she stated to the Council that "she always had her own way!" I say this very month, because the month of Dec. is the month fixed upon in the paper containing her charges against me, and because deacon Drake mentioned in the Vestry that it took place sometime between the 10th and 18th of that month. (and truly there was no great difficulty in fixing the time after the child was 18 months old,) and because Mr. Shailer told the Committee of the Phillips Church who went to his house to see Rhoda, that her call at my house was from the 10th to the 18th of Dec. And the Deacon and Mr. Shailer doubtless urged this circumstance as an evidence that the girl had spoken the truth. They had not then seen the book of Dr. Chapin which fixes the time of Rhoda's going to Abington the 12th day of January. And as she had uniformly said that it took place when she called to bid my family good bye, two or three days before she went to Abington, it became necessary in order to accomplish their plan of convicting me, to alter dates, and to carry the time forward from between the 10th and 18th of Dec. to the 9th or 10th of Jan. I would here remind the reader that Rhoda was turned away from my house for her bad conduct on the 2d day of Nov. 1841; and that she then said "I'll pay you for this!" Within eleven months and a half from this time she became a mother.

It may be proper further to state that it was in evidence before the Council that on the 13th day of Feb. 1842, not more than five weeks from the time when Rhoda said that she called at my house and had that fracas with me, she applied to Mrs. Chapin for medicine, because she did not like to apply to the Doctor, and told Mrs. C. that she wanted it for suppression which had troubled her for 2 or 3 months. Mrs. C. either at that time or soon after, said to Rhoda that if she was married she should laugh at her, thus giving her distinctly to understand what might be her situation. And yet it was testified to the Council that in the latter part of February, Rhoda went to Boston and spent five days, but never came near me. Now if I had been the guilty man, who can doubt but that her first object would have been to get access to me? But she returns to Abington without letting me know that she had been in Boston. Neither does she say any thing to me on the subject till the 22d day of April, when her sister, Mrs. Easty sends her to me for money. Where was she during those five days? She says she was at Mr. Hoyt's. And where did she go the first of April on her final return to Boston? She says she went to the same Mr. Hoyt's. Whether the plan for accusing me was there arranged, the reader can judge for himself. It was moreover testified to the Council that when Rhoda left Abington on the first of April, doctor Chapin said he should judge from her appearance, that she was not far from four months advanced in pregnancy. And the child being born on the 18th of Sept. showed that the doctor did not greatly err in his judgment. Whereas the first of April was only two months and twenty days from the fatal time when she said she called at my house. No wonder that my enemies and accusers wish to alter dates!

Rhoda states that she called to bid us good bye before she went to Abington. The truth is that neither myself, nor any of my family knew that she had been to Abington, or had any thought of going there till after her return in April. We were as ignorant of her place of residence during that period as the inhabitants of another planet, and cared as little about it. The reader must not forget that Rhoda testified under oath before the Council that I was the only man who ever had any sexual intercourse with her.

my friends in the city knew me so well, and appreciated my arduous and successful labors in S. Boston so highly, that they would cheerfully aid me in my journey, without wishing me to infringe on the property in my house. If I supposed that any gentleman, after reading this statement should think that I meant to deceive him in the matter, I would cheerfully refund to him the amount he gave, if he will inform me what it is, provided I have any thing left, after getting through with the expenses of my trial. I have been obliged to sell my house, with the ready consent of my wife, to prevent any more unjust attachments from being levied on it, as well as to obtain the means of defraying the expenses which have already accrued and are still accruing in consequence of the calamity which my enemies have brought upon me; and as I have a family to provide for, without any income, my persecutors having succeeded in banishing me from the pulpit, and cutting off my salary, I do feel at times disheartened. But though cast down, I am not in despair. I still trust in that God who is able to defend and provide, and can cause the wrath of man to praise him, and the remainder thereof restrain.

But how came deacon Drake to get such an insight into my temporal affairs? Instead of being satisfied with the sixty-five hundred dollars which I had begged for the meeting-house and its appendages, and of which *he* is enjoying the benefit, not *I*, he must busy himself in ascertaining the dates and the amount of payments on my mortgage. I can imagine but one way in which his discovery was made. When Capt. Glover gave me up my note with the endorsements written on it, I noticed that he drew it from a wrapper on which the same endorsements were written, with the dates. That wrapper, I have reason to believe, has been in the hands and under the eyes of deacon Drake, or of some one who sympathizes with him in his enmity to me. And thus he obtains a secret which he would gladly wield with tremendous force against me; but which may, in the end, prove as little creditable to himself as the means employed to get the statements of Rhoda Davidson. And is deacon Drake ready to have such an espionage exercised over him? If such a scrutiny were had into all his transactions with the Freeman's Bank, might not some things be discovered which an enemy could turn to his disadvantage? I hope that all his management there is fair and honest,—that there is no concealment or double dealing. But it would be strange indeed if an eagle-eyed enemy might not discover something which has the *appearance* of wrong, and *might possibly* be used against him. If an enemy of the deacon were to have a private interview with each individual who has an interest in the Bank, as *he* had with the female who lived in my family a dozen years ago, and propose questions similar to those which he proposed to her, it might not require a prophet's ken to discern something which could easily be turned to his injury. I hope not; for I have no wish that *he* should be annoyed by inquisitors as *I* have been.

And is there any thing more? Yes, more still. About the time of the meeting of the Council, deacon Drake was in the provision store of Mr. Craft, and there said that possibly the Council might acquit me, but added, "When we get him here to court, and a man swears that he has had the bad disorder, I guess people will believe him guilty then." Similar

expressions he has used in other places and before other individuals. I have evidence that this story was reported by my enemies in Exeter during the progress of my trial. If the story reached the ears of any portion of the Council, as doubtless it did, the reader can judge what influence it had on the final vote of condemnation. (While the Council were in session the deacons and the two sons of Mr. Dunham were here.) A grosser slander was never uttered by human lips. I solemnly declare, before God and man, that at no period of my life did I ever visit a bad house, or have connection with a woman of ill fame. Could such a thing have been *possible* without the knowledge of my wife? And if known by her, would she have lived with me another day? Neither she nor her parents would have consented for the wealth of India. Surely if that had been the case, I must have applied to some physician; and my first care would have been to enjoin secrecy upon him; for as a clergyman, discovery would have been my ruin. But if there be a physician in Boston, or in any other place, to whom I thus applied, or requested to keep such a secret, I hereby absolve him from his obligations to secrecy, and give him my free and full permission to publish all he knows to the world, and spread it far and wide on the wings of the wind.*

And is not this all? No; there is something more still. My enemies say that when in Yale College I kept a mistress! And how came this report to reach my ears? I will tell the reader how. A friend of mine informed me that the Rev. Mr. Shailer told a gentleman who was putting up a clock in the new meeting-house in Brookline, that he understood that when in College, I kept a mistress. This friend went to see Mr. Shailer about it, and Mr. S. said he had reported such a story; but as it was a general report, and could be substantiated by those who were with me in College, he did not see what harm there was in repeating it. A fine standard of morals by which to regulate the conduct and conversation of a minister of that gospel which says, "Speak evil of no man. Thou shalt not raise a false report, nor put thy hand with the wicked to be an unrighteous witness." Was this doing as he would be done by? What if it were told to me that *he* was the seducer of Rhoda Davidson, and that it could be substantiated by the fact that she once lived in his family and had said to others that he paid her more attention while living there than he did his wife, and by the fact that he had taken such an active part in persuading her to clear him and accuse me? Would he think it right

* I apprehend that this story originated from the following circumstance: The last Sabbath in February, 1833, I preached in Newburyport three sermons. This effort, together with the journey by stage in a severely cold day, greatly aggravated a disorder which had troubled me a week or more. It was a difficulty of the urinary organs, arising from an inflammation of the bladder. I was confined by it to my house till some time in April. I made no request of my physician to keep my disease private, neither had I any occasion to do so. The next year I had the Spasmodic Cholera, and was attended by the same physician. My case he afterwards reported in the Medical Journal, a copy of which now lies before me. In this report he speaks of me as "a highly respectable clergyman." Now if he had just cured me of the bad disorder, he must have had strange ideas as to what constitutes respectability in a clergyman! If such had been the fact, no man who knows him can believe him capable of calling me a "highly respectable clergyman."

in me to report the story to a clock maker, or to any body else? But Mr. S. doubtless thought that he was doing God service by joining my enemies in their attempts utterly and forever to crush and destroy me. But as to the report itself, I pronounce it as vile a slander as was ever uttered by the tongue of a man or woman. I appeal to the then officers of Yale College, and to my class-mates scattered all over the country; and for the information of the citizens of Boston, I appeal to Rev. Louis Dwight, Secretary of the Prison Discipline Society; and for the information of the citizens of New Hampshire, to Rev. Z. Barstow of Keene, who were both my class-mates, and with whom, when in College, I spent many sweet hours in prayer and religious conference, and who no more suspected me of such conduct, and had no more reason for it, than they had to suspect *any* and *every* member of the class.

Can there be any thing more? Yes, one thing more. I have recently been informed of another circumstance out of which my enemies are seeking to make capital to my injury. They say that my wife once left me because of her want of confidence in me. We were married at Philadelphia in July, 1825. In November, 1827, we removed to Boston. Mrs. F.'s first child was born in Nov. 1828. During the preceding spring she was troubled with a cough, and feared a decline in consequence, as she then thought, of the piercing sea winds, to which she had never been accustomed. Her parents came at that time, quite unexpectedly, to make us a visit, and finding their daughter in this state of health, thought that she must remove at once from the sea air, or consumption would follow.— They proposed that Mrs. F. should go with her mother to New York, and thence up the North River to some town where she designed to spend the summer. I at first objected, because, as I conceived, they had mistaken the cause of her illness. But at length I yielded. When she left home I understood that she would write as soon as she arrived at New York, whereas her understanding of the matter was that she should write as soon as she had reached the place where she and her mother were to spend the summer; and as the place had not then been designated, of course it could not be named. They tarried in New York longer than they expected, so that before they reached Pittsfield, where they at length concluded to tarry, some two weeks passed away before I had obtained any information where they were. Receiving no letter all this time, I began to feel a good deal anxious, and expressed my anxiety to Mr. and Mrs. Dunham, with whom I was more intimate at that time than with any other family in my parish, but with whose characters I was not then acquainted. And Mr. Dunham, who is now endeavoring to turn this circumstance to my disadvantage, tried then to make me believe that my wife did not intend to write to me at all, and he actually advised me to advertise her, forbidding all persons to harbor or trust her on my account.

In this excited state, occasioned in part by officious, hollow-hearted friends, I went to the Rev. Dr. Wisner and disclosed to him my troubles. I had then ascertained that Mrs. F. and her mother were in Pittsfield, and I soon received a letter from her, which stated that her understanding was that she was not to write till she had reached the place where she was going to remain. As Dr. Wisner was about commencing a journey

to the Springs, I requested him to call and see her. He did so; and immediately wrote me a line advising me to go to Pittsfield. Accordingly I went, and found them convinced that I was right in my opinion as to the cause of Mrs. F.'s illness; that there was no danger of a decline in consequence of the sea air, and that she might safely return to Boston. She did return most cheerfully; and there the matter ended. And she testified before the Referees last May that she had lived with me nineteen years, and that she believed me to be a pure minded man. Her testimony before the Council is well known.

Now why should a matter of this kind be brought up against me which took place sixteen years ago? If I were culpable in this affair, did not my parishioners know it? But I never learnt till very recently, that one of them ever blamed me for it. That cause must surely be a bad one which requires to be sustained by such means. My wife wishes me here to state, that whatever impressions might then have been made, if there was any blame to be attached to any one in that matter, it ought not to attach to me. Besides, if I had done any thing implicating my moral character, Dr. Wisner must have known it. But I was more intimate with him than with any other clergyman in Boston from that time till the day of his death; and no one of my brethren appeared more ready and willing to exchange pulpits with me than himself. To those who knew the moral purity of Dr. Wisner's character, this speaks volumes as to his opinion of me.

My readers will doubtless think it low business to notice such trifling concerns. True enough, it is low business. But when my enemies descend so low as to use such things to my injury, I feel constrained to follow them, though they do conduct me into the mud and mire. And as I was determined at first to notice all their slanders which have come to my ears, I could not pass over this matter in silence. If they should hereafter invent and propagate any more slanders, the public can hardly expect me to attempt a refutation; nor would they be forward to excuse me if I did attempt it. I will only add that if my character does not stand as fair as their own, among the people who best know us, then I freely confess that my deposition from the ministry is just, and that I ought never to be restored.

What more my enemies will do I know not. Perhaps, however, they fancy that they have done their business so thoroughly, that there remains nothing more for them to do, but simply to look on and calmly review their work of ruin. But if they are not yet satisfied, let them go on. Let them if they will, hire their affidavit makers to swear away my character, if any yet remains, as has been done in more instances than one in reference to the best of men, and may be done again. Let them continue to hunt me "like as a partridge is hunted upon the mountains," or as a beast of prey pursues its victim thirsting for blood. Or they may threaten me with suits at law for uttering libels against them. But this is a game at which two can play, and who will be the winner no one can doubt. Besides, I have uttered no libel. God forbid that I should do so. I have told in these pages the honest truth. All the facts here stated are true,—in every essential particular, *literally* and *wholly*

true. They may deny their truth, and still assert that I am as vile a wretch as they have represented me to be. If so, I only ask the reader to turn his eye back to my testimonials, as to character, when I commenced my labors in S. Boston. And as to my statements respecting my watchers, I refer for proof to the Referees. They are well known in Boston and elsewhere. They heard the whole. They are not men to eat their own words, or annul their own doings in a case like this. What they saw, they will declare ; and what they heard, they will affirm. Yea, they have already affirmed it, when they say "that after a severe and thorough scrutiny, they find nothing in any part of my life which prevents them from according to me their full confidence as a minister of Christ." And when my case comes on for trial in Boston, I shall beg the Court for liberty to bring the truth of what I have stated in evidence. And if I am then convicted by the jury, and the Judge sentence me to the State Prison, I submit. And even in that confinement and disgrace, I should deem my condition far preferable to that of my enemies and persecutors, who may be roaming the world at large. Of a clear conscience in this matter my enemies cannot deprive me, neither can they take from me the confidence of my wife and children. But what are they doing? By what spirit must they be actuated? Even if I were guilty, could they be justified in treating me in a manner so malignant and cruel? If I am innocent of these charges (and I now solemnly affirm before God that I am, as I have affirmed from the beginning,) do they not deserve to be rebuked in terms of burning indignation?

And what have I done to merit all this long continued and virulent persecution? Nothing—absolutely nothing. I have requested and entreated the deacons, both verbally and in writing, to tell me wherein I had injured them by word or deed, that I might make them the reparation which the Gospel demands, and which my own feelings would dictate. But they were silent, and well they might be ; for they *know* that I never injured a hair of their heads. And although I have known the feelings of deacon Drake towards me since 1833, yet on all occasions have I treated him kindly. And I think I may say, without the sin of arrogance, that if I had any established character in S. Boston, it was that of a peace-maker. If this be not so, then let all my former church and people testify against me.

I will here insert a letter sent to the Council signed by 52 members of the Phillips Church ; 20 males and 32 females. The gentlemen who brought the letter remarked that there were 5 or 6 more male members who would have signed it, had they had an opportunity. And when the number of males, who had signed the paper, was announced to the Council, the question was asked, "How many male members are there in the Phillips Church?" To which I replied that I believed there were about 50. The Rev. Mr. Patton immediately arose and announced himself as the pastor of Phillips church, and said that there were 102 male members. When I returned to my study I at once examined the book of names, and found that when I left the Church there were 67 male members, 16 of whom were either non-residents at the time or have since been dismissed from the Church. And having been repeatedly inform-

ed since my settlement in Exeter, that more members had left the Church than had joined it under Mr. Patton, and that he himself had mentioned the fact in the prayer meetings of the Church, and lamented over it, I thought it quite strange to hear him proclaim to the Council that there were 102 male members in that Church. I will venture to express it as my full belief that there are not 54 male members in that Church *who worship with them, or take any part in their business meetings*. Surely Mr. Patton must have had his mind on the multiplication table instead of simple addition. However, the impression was probably made on the minds of the Council that my word was of little value, and doubtless he felt it to be quite important that such an impression should then be made; for if I could be convicted of lying in other matters, it would go far to prove that I was lying in relation to the case then pending before the Council. Deacon Vinton too was then present, if I remember correctly, and as he had long been a member and an officer in that Church, and one of the examining Committee, it was reasonable to expect that he would have corrected the error of his pastor. But he was silent. Mr. Patton is a young man, and of little experience. When he has become somewhat older, perhaps he will give heed to the words of Solomon, "He that meddleth with strife not belonging to him, is like one that taketh a dog by the ears."

BOSTON, JULY 18, 1844.

WE the undersigned members of Phillips Church, have been personally acquainted, and most of us intimately, with the Rev. Joy H. Fairchild for many years; and we would very freely state that we have always believed, and do still believe that his moral and Christian character has been and now is, unexceptionable. He has visited in many of our families, and not a word or act was ever remarked as in any way inconsistent with the character of a Christian minister.

In reference to a vote of our Church published in the Mercantile Journal, and stating that it was unanimous in exonerating certain individuals, members of said Church, from all blame, we believe the matter was not generally understood. There were many members who did not vote; and we believe, if the Church meeting had been called at any time after the subject had been more fully known, the whole case would have presented a very different result.*

* There are certain things connected with that church meeting which need some explanation. I will here explain the matter as it has been explained to me. The Result of the Referees in acquitting me, had, by implication at least, condemned the deacons and Mr. Howe. They were alarmed, and well they might be, for they had rendered themselves deserving of discipline. From this position they wished to extricate themselves as speedily as possible. And when they had obtained Rhoda's statement and my letter to her, they thought themselves well prepared for action. Accordingly a meeting of the church is called for their exoneration. They tell their story about watching in their own way, and that they had been governed by motives the most pure and righteous. They then intimate that they have some awful disclosures to make about me, which must convince even my best friends that I am guilty and they are innocent. Finally, they make known their wonderful discoveries with regard to Rhoda Davidson; and my letter, I am told, was read, which as they affirmed, was a virtual acknowledgement of guilt. The case was clear. There could be no doubt. It was proposed by deacon Drake to raise a committee of my personal friends to call on Rhoda. At this, or a subsequent meeting, when all was excitement and darkness, the vote was passed to exonerate the deacons and Mr. Howe. And here I would ask, what connexion had their exoneration with their story about me and Rhoda Davidson? Must the doings of the Referees be annulled, and Mrs. Dunbar voted an adulteress, because my servant maid had been hired to impeach my moral character? Must all their iniquitous conduct in relation to the matter of watching be pronounced holy and upright, because Rhoda had been induced by money to accuse me of crime? Truly the brethren were taken by surprise, and some voted as they did, without knowing what they were doing. Others remained neutral and did not vote at all. This was the way, as I am informed, of obtaining that vote which was published in the Mercantile Journal with so much parade.

Besides, what had the deacons of Phillips Church to do with me or my morals? Nothing

We believe our late pastor to be naturally a very sensitive and timid man ; that ill health very much increased his sensitiveness and timidity ; and that in this weak and disordered state of body and mind he was driven to take a desperately imprudent step in agreeing to pay *hush money*, and so fell into a snare.

Laban A. Tyler	Henry N. Clark	Hannah Gurney 2d
Mary Tyler	Reuben Hunting	Catharine Robertson
James A. Calef	Sarah Hunting	Mary H. Whitman
William Aiken	Charlotte Wey	Rebecca H. Learned
Louisa Calef	Rachel C. Rich	Rebecca H. Bird
George A. Hinckley	Clarissa Lowd	Maria Piper
John R. Butler	Snow Whitman	Benjamin Tilton
E. G. Piper	Sullivan L. Carpenter	Nahum Dunbar
Joseph D. Winn	Lucinda W. Carpenter	Nathaniel D. Vose
C. P. Rockwood	Robert Hussey	Mary S. Vose
S. L. Rockwood	Sophia B. Hussey	Abigail S. Eams
Lucy Mayo	Ruth D. Dewire	Betsey Tarr
Abigail H. Bird	Mary Malone	Adeline S. Whitney
Ruthy Clark	Hannah Gurney	Hannah Vose
William D. Adams	J. P. Kent	C. Sherman
Mary R. Adams	Ann Kent	Jacob Sherman
John Vose	Lucy Rice	Elvira Smith

These names I shall remember with feelings of gratitude unutterable, till I go down to my grave. And as these friends cast their eyes over this page, I wish them to feel that I am addressing *them*. I call you friends, for such indeed you are. In *my* darkest hour, and *your* darkest hour, when no light seemed to break upon the subject,—when every thing was said to you which human tongue could utter, to convince you that you had been deceived,—that I had palmed myself upon you for fourteen years as a good minister of Christ, while all this time I was a very fiend incarnate, a pander to my lusts, and too vile to be intrusted with your wives and daughters,—a liar, a hypocrite, a seducer, and a debauchee,—yes, even then, when it seemed as though my enemies possessed all the light, and left nothing for you but darkness—darkness thicker than that of Egypt, you still adhered to your former pastor. You thought you knew him well. You looked back on all his intercourse with you, in prosperity and adversity, in your private dwellings and in public places, alone and in company ; and not being able to bring to your recollection a single word or deed, or look, or motion which indicated impurity in him, you felt bound as christian men and women, to comfort and defend him. And

more than the deacons of any other Church. If public rumor accused me of crime, and they felt conscience bound to notice it, why not notice it in the proper way ? I was then the pastor of another Church. Why not come or send to that Church, and let *them* take action in the case ? No ; such a step, so proper and Scriptural, would not answer their purpose. *They* must have the management of the affair, and by themselves or agents, hold out the strong inducement of money, otherwise their darling object would not have been attained. The Church in Exeter would never have *bribed* the girl to testify against their pastor. The deacons were doubtless aware of this, and therefore they took the course they did,—a course which must bring down upon their heads the reprobation and scorn of all good men and good citizens. No man has a right to do evil because he thinks that thereby good may come. Even a *good* end will never justify *unlawful* means. But the reader can hardly fail to perceive that the deacons regarded my *destruction* as necessary to their *salvation*—that unless *I* was put down, *they* must be of course. Hence their anxiety to set up a false issue before the brethren, and force them to vote when they were completely in the dark as to the true merits of the case.

verily you have defended him; you have comforted him. I pen these lines with weeping eyes and a throbbing heart. I thank you,—ten thousand thousand times I thank you. May that Savior be your rewarder who says, “Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, ye have done it unto me.” I have been brought by my persecutions to the very gates of death. But I still live—live to bless and praise God for such friends as you,—friends *true—tried—firm—sure*. I can say no more.

I will here insert a letter presented to the Council, signed by 63 citizens of South Boston at large, and comprising individuals of all denominations.

SOUTH BOSTON, July 19th, 1844.

To all whom it may concern; this is to certify that we the undersigned have been acquainted with the Rev. Joy H. Fairchild for a long time; some of us many years, and others less. Many of us are members of the Society lately under his pastoral charge, and others, citizens of S. Boston, and living in the neighborhood of his late residence.

Mr Fairchild has, for ought we have ever before heard, (that is to say prior to these late charges,) or even intimated, borne the character of a highly exemplary man while with us, and in every respect manifested the spirit of a faithful and devoted Christian and minister of the Gospel. From what information has come to our knowledge, we believe Mr. F. is a persecuted and much injured man. We have no desire to screen him, if guilty; but undoubted and conclusive evidence will be required by us, before we can entertain the opinion that he has done any thing to forfeit our esteem.

Cyrus Alger,
Stephen Jenney,
Horatio N. Crane,
William H. Howard,
Jonathan Pierce,
Isaac Bird,
Samuel Hill,
William Turmbull,
Joshua Jenkins,
John P. Russell,
Caleb S. Whitman,
John A. Harris,
Samuel B. Dean,
Frederick Crafts,
Charles H. Reed,
John W. Crafts,
Seth Pettee,
Samuel Waldron,
Isaac P. Clapp,
Henry Homer,
Joseph Thing,
Abner Forbes,]

Brewster Raynolds,
Joseph H. Clinch,
Samuel Leeds,
J. Tillson,
William Macloon,
Henry W. Fletcher,
Osborn Howes,
D. Nickerson,
Noah Brooks,
John W. Blanchard,
Willis Howes,
Geo. Thatcher,
James Morrill,
Barnard Ford,
Joseph Nickerson,
Geo. E. Bent,
Barzillai Howes,
Timothy Baker,
F. Nickerson,
Thomas Nickerson,
N. P. Mann,
E. M. P. Wells.*

Paul Sears.
Daniel P. Morse,
Stephen Jenney, Jr.
William E. Gutterson,
Charles E. Paige,
J. H. Eaton,
Joseph Colbourn,
Caleb Thurston,
Seth Adams,
Benj. D. Baxter,
Geo. N. Noyes,
William Andrews,
William P. Loring,
John Larrabee,
Andrew C. Slater,
Henry Safford,
A. A. Whitney,
W. T. Parker,
E. W. F. Rice,
Robert G. Living,
James Tucker,

And what shall I say to these, my former fellow-citizens of South Boston? To say I thank you is very trite. It is too cold and formal. But when I tell you that I utter it with unfeigned lips, and with a heart bursting with gratitude, you will not feel insulted by it, but receive it kindly.

* The Rev. Mr. Wells originated in Hartford, and knew me there. He appended to his name the following: “I have known Mr. F. as a minister more than thirty years, and have never heard ill of him till now.”

You have long known me. With many of you I was in almost daily intercourse. I have had dealings with you, and you well know whether I was trickish and dishonest,—whether charitable and tender-hearted, or selfish and unfeeling. You have long known me as a minister of the Gospel. You have long known my doctrine and manner of life, whether my conduct *out of the pulpit*, gave the lie to what I advanced *in the pulpit*. And though I differed from some of you in religious opinions, yet you cheerfully conceded to me what you claimed for yourselves—*the right of private judgment*. You well knew that this right I held as dear and sacred. When you heard me from the pulpit, you expected me to declare what I honestly believed to be God's truth, uninfluenced by favor, unawed by fear. But a style of denunciation I never adopted, because good men may differ in their religious views, and be good men still; and because no man, with the Bible in his hand, is responsible to his fellow-men for his belief, but to his God alone. Perhaps it is owing to this fact in part, that I find on that paper the names of so many whose religious views are not in harmony with my own. But whatever induced you thus to express your high opinion and regard, you are entitled to my lasting gratitude.—And you not only knew *me* when you signed that paper, but you also knew *my enemies*. On an acquaintance of years with both parties, you were well qualified to judge which was most deserving your respect and confidence. And notwithstanding they were among you, telling their own story in their own way, to prejudice your minds against me, while I was absent, and kept away by an indictment procured, I doubt not, through their influence; thus depriving me of all opportunity to defend myself by personal interviews with you,—even under these circumstances so unfavorable to myself, you sent the paper to the Council, to defend the man whom you “believed to be much persecuted and injured.” Again, I thank you for that paper, which was so consoling and healing to my broken heart. May God reward you a thousand fold.*

And here my story ends. I have nothing more to say at present. I have not set down aught in malice, or for the purpose of avenging myself on my adversaries. I have acted now, as I have done from the beginning, solely on the defensive; and the only complaint which I anticipate from the candid is, that I have remained passive so long, with such weapons of defence in my hands. My chief apology is that controversy has ever been the abhorrence of my heart. I am constitutionally timid and yielding, so that when an enemy smites on one cheek, I am inclined not to give back the blow, but rather to turn to him the other cheek. And I believe that all who have known me the most intimately, will testify that I here state the truth. But I have been *forced* into this controversy, and to have maintained a longer silence, would doubtless have been con-

* Deacon Drake was much dissatisfied with the conduct of Governor Briggs in relation to that indictment. When it was announced in the papers that the Governor had declined making any demand on Governor Steele for my arrest, that I might be taken by an officer like a felon, and hurried to Court in Boston, the deacon remarked to his neighbor, Mr. W. that he did not like the Governor, because he refused to make a requisition on the Governor of New Hampshire for my arrest. And Mr. W. *inferred* from what the deacon had said to others, as well as to himself, that the Governor would hardly obtain *his* vote for a re-election in consequence of this delinquency.

strued into an acknowledgement of guilt. Therefore have I spoken. "I speak as unto wise men ; judge ye what I say."

As nothing cuts like the truth, it is presumed that the individuals here implicated will be full of wrath and indignation. They may accuse me of writing this book to excite public sympathy, as they did when their unkindness drove me to madness and an attempt on my life. True, I need that sympathy, and should feel grateful for it; but my aim in writing is far higher. It is to vindicate the cause of truth and justice, which has been trampled in the dust. It is to let the world see that there are two sides to this question, one of which has hitherto been concealed from their view. Or my enemies may call me a liar in this thing as they have in others. They may warn the public against giving credit to my statements. But "facts are stubborn things." They may be *denied*, but not *disproved*. I have not penned a single sentence which I do not most sincerely believe to be true, and which I cannot prove to be true, so far as the nature of the case admits of proof. But most of my statements are susceptible of the fullest proof, as the reader has doubtless remarked while perusing these pages. A mere denial on the part of my enemies *will* not and *ought* not to satisfy the public. As to all the essential facts in my story, I have given my documents and my references to confirm their truth. I could do more ; and a candid public will demand no more. To them, for the present, I now submit my case. And as I said in the beginning, I leave them to decide whether I am a *knave* or a *martyr*.

NOTE. I ought to have stated on the 43rd page that when my letter to Rhoda was read by Mr. Adams, I immediately inquired for my first letter to her. And when Mr. A. said it had been destroyed, I expressed much regret; for the first letter would have explained the last. In that letter I reproved her for her wickedness in extorting money from me in the way she had done, reminding her that she well knew my innocence, and that her charge against me was false. In the letter which she preserved, I did not touch on that topic for reasons mentioned in my written statement before the Council. She had then communicated the matter to her father. And as my hand was thus in the lion's mouth, I dared say nothing to provoke, lest all hope of escape should fail me. This will account for the mild terms in which my last letter was couched.

APPENDIX.

Most of my readers have doubtless seen a review of the proceedings and result of the Council published soon after my trial, in the N. E. Puritan, and which has since been printed in a pamphlet, with corrections and additions. "A member of the Council" has recently been employed in reviewing that review in two numbers published in the same paper. The first number was truly the weakest of all weak things, (always excepting what was miscalled my defence before the Council :) but the second number has more strength, and as the style is somewhat different from that of the first, it is not unreasonable to suppose that he obtained some help from one of the Committee of the Suffolk South Association; possibly from the commentator of the Song of Solomon. But the strength of the second number is not derived from a successful grapple with the reviewer's arguments, which he well knew he could not answer, but by forcing in other topics which had little connection with what he had professedly undertaken to accomplish, and the only design of which probably was to fasten on the minds of the doubting a conviction of my guilt, by introducing matters as evidence in the case which had never been submitted to the Council. Indeed, his chief object in all that he has written appears to have been to convince the public that so large and respectable a Council could not have come to a wrong result, and administers quite a severe rebuke to the reviewer for intimating that such a thing was possible. But the reviewer justly remarks, "that no Council this side of Rome is infallible, and that it is no sin, in New England, to call in question the correctness of an Ecclesiastical decision." But "A member of the Council" seems to think that it is expedient for one poor clergyman to perish, rather than have a majority of the Council perish in the matter of their decision. The six able and influential members who voted for my acquittal, he would gladly have the world believe, did not mean what they declared by their vote, so that four of them have felt it necessary to publish letters, stating that they voted understandingly, and meant thereby to negative the doings of the Council. Now certainly I have as much respect for the decisions of Ecclesiastical Councils as the gentleman himself, and as a body, that Council was composed of as wise and judicious men as can be found in our Churches. And circumstanced as they then were, I am not disposed to blame them for their result. But when further light is beaming on a subject with which they were but partially acquainted, I do not think it right for "A member of the Council" to represent that light as darkness. I ask for nothing but fair play, and an opportunity to establish my innocence, which indeed ought to be taken for granted till guilt is *proved*. But the Council thought my *innocence* was not proved, and therefore *guilt* must follow of course, thus reversing the common principles of justice. And is there a member of that Council who might not be charged with crimes of which it would be utterly impossible to prove himself innocent? Now to represent light as darkness in this matter, seems too much like pride of opinion, and a determination not

to be influenced by any further evidence which may be adduced in my favor. To reason with men who have thus committed themselves is truly a hopeless task; and if I supposed that my readers generally were possessed of such minds, this book would never have seen the light. I should have submitted to my fate, and waited for the disclosures of the last day to establish my innocence. But there are multitudes in the community whose minds are open to conviction, and who will gladly admit further light without calling it thicker darkness. And it is to *their* eyes alone that I commend the perusal of these pages. But I must express the hope that "A member of the Council" will, in future, find some more profitable way to employ his time and pen than to take *such* a method utterly to crush and destroy a man whom he has contributed not a little to banish from the pulpit which he once occupied, (and for aught "A member of the Council" knows to the contrary,) with as much purity of purpose, and evidence of the divine approbation and blessing as himself. If he *must* write again, I beg him to prove, if he can, that the reviewer of my trial has not clearly demonstrated that I was not convicted by the Council in accordance with either law or gospel. I would further request him to prove, if he can, that the Scribe of the Council, in publishing an account of the doings of that body, did not act a most unkind and unauthorized part, in making the impression on the public mind, that the minority were in harmony with the majority in sentiment and feeling, and voted to acquit me, not because they believed me innocent, but for some other reason? Was it right thus to represent the Council as virtually unanimous, and in order to give the statement greater weight, to add the influential name of the venerable and respected Moderator, without his knowledge or consent? Does "A member of the Council" approve of such conduct on the part of the Scribe?

This is not all. "A member of the Council" in his published communications, plainly intimates that the gentlemen who voted for my acquittal were my special friends and under my special influence,—that there was a frequent passing and repassing from the Lecture Room to my house, and consequently that they could not have been impartial in the vote they gave,—that they acted not on evidence adduced in open court, but on my assurances and declarations made to them in my private room. Now such an insinuation is as untrue as it is ungenerous. In reference to Messrs. Hopkins and Haines, I solemnly affirm that they were entire strangers to me, having never seen them till I saw them in the Lecture Room at the meeting of the Council, neither had I ever had any communication with them in relation to my case. And during the session of the Council, I never spoke to them, except to pass the usual salutations, till the evidence was all in, and the vote taken to adjourn from Friday evening till Monday morning. On Saturday morning Mr. Haines called at my house for the first time, and said to me that if the case had been submitted to an impartial jury, it was his opinion that, on such testimony as had been adduced, I should be acquitted in ten minutes. As he was by profession a lawyer in high standing, and of course well qualified to judge of the nature of evidence, his opinion thus voluntarily expressed, encouraged me to hope that justice would be done. As to Mr. Hopkins, he never called at my house at all, nor did I exchange one word with him relative to my trial, till after the Council came to their decision and the result made known. He then called and expressed his Christian sympathy and affection, for which I thanked him, and shall carry him in grateful remembrance to my grave. As to my intercourse with the Rev. Messrs French and Clark, so ungenerously and insultingly

alluded to by "A member of the Council," I have nothing to say. Those gentlemen have already spoken for themselves in the Puritan of Oct. 25th. They are well known to the community; and if "A member of the Council" thinks he can make the public believe that those gentlemen were capable of such dishonorable conduct as he imputes to them, he is much mistaken. His object in these insinuations must be obvious to all. How melancholy it is that even good men should thus be led aside from the path of rectitude by their prejudices or passions.*

But if it be proper for any one to make allusions to out-door influence on the minds of the Council, that work belongs to me. And here I would ask "A member of the Council" why the Rev. Messrs Riddel and Beecher were here during the secret session of the Council, when no further testimony was to be admitted, and of course their specific work was done? How happened it that they were putting up at the same public house with the Council, and mingling with the members at meal times and during their recesses? Have I not quite as much reason to insinuate that they were here to overawe the Council and influence the result, as "A member of the Council" has to insinuate that the minority of six were overawed and influenced by me in the vote they gave? I believe that a candid public will come to the conclusion that if there was any undue influence used on either side, that influence was all against me, and not a particle in my favor. And if every member of the Council who heard Messrs Riddel and Beecher converse on the subject in private, were to declare all he knows, I have not a doubt but he would say that their conversation *did* make, and was evidently *designed* to make the impression on his mind, that, in their opinion I was guilty, and that the Council would be recreant to duty unless they deposed me from the ministry. It is the opinion of more than one that the cause of truth and justice would have suffered no detriment, had those gentlemen remained in Boston during the *secret* session of the Council, to say nothing of the part they acted in *open* session. Certain I am that their presence here, during those two days, was of no special service to me. It seemed too much like lawyers mingling with the jury after having plead the cause of their client, and before the verdict was made up and declared. If the reader should think me uncharitable in these remarks, I would just refer him to the extract from Mr. Riddel's letter which he will find in a note on the 48th page of this book. I say these things that "A member of the Council" may be aware that I can make insinuations with regard to out-door influences as well as he, and such as will quite as readily be believed by every candid man, as his own.

I would ask "A member of the Council" if he has forgotten the awful

* When Messrs Hopkins and Haines published their letter in which they say, "we did not believe Mr. Fairchild guilty, we do not now believe him guilty, and we have faith that ere long his innocence will be made to appear to all," then "A member of the Council," (unless I mistake the gentleman,) publishes a communication in which he plainly intimates that he did not intend to include them in the number of those who believed me guilty. But when the Rev. Messrs French and Clark publish their letter in which they say, "we *had* no conviction, and *have* no conviction that Mr. Fairchild cannot be innocent in this matter; we did not consider him *at all* proved to be guilty," then "A member of the Council" more than insinuates that they were influenced by their frequent interviews with me! This brings to my mind a remark which I have somewhere read in an ancient book, that the three hardest words to pronounce in the English language, are these: "I was mistaken." And though the remark might have been made centuries ago, yet it is as hard to pronounce them *now* as *then*. At least it would seem that their pronunciation has not become any easier, so far as "A member of the Council" is concerned. He seems unwilling to err, if he must err at all, on the side of charity. He is so fearful lest a guilty man should escape, that he seems anxious to inflict punishment before guilt is proved.

disclosures of Maria Monk! Many individuals, both clergymen and laymen, as pious and discerning as himself, gave undoubting credit to her stories. Why? Because, as "A member of the Council" says, in reference to Rhoda, "there was an air of sincerity in her manner which seemed to say that she was uttering what she felt and knew to be truth." But a thorough investigation of her stories disclosed the gross impositions she had been practising on their credulity. And though many, for a long time, clung to her as closely as does "A member of the Council" cling to Rhoda, and were quite as unwilling to give her up, yet they were compelled at last to confess that she was not altogether so virtuous and truthful as she had made them believe. And as Miss Maria deceived *them*, so Miss Rhoda may have deceived *him*. He further says: "I doubt whether the most eagle eyed adversary could have discovered in her appearance or manner any thing objectionable, or leading to a suspicion that she was not sincere in what she said." What, a witness sincere when uttering the most palpable falsehoods! I am perfectly amazed that "A member of the Council" should have penned such a sentence as this. Did he suppose that no one saw or heard her on the stand but himself? Did he think that her examination, as published in the trial, had never been read! Or has he embraced the strange notion that it is no matter how many falsehoods a witness utters, provided they are only uttered with apparent sincerity? If he has embraced such a sentiment, I think it high time for him to let me and my character alone. "Physician, heal thyself."

I will now quote one whole paragraph from the last communication of "A member of the Council," as *especially* objectionable.

"I understand that Mr. Davidson, the father of the principal witness against Mr. F., has returned from sea; that an interview has been had with him by several responsible individuals having an interest in this case; and that his statement to them is such as entirely to corroborate the testimony of his daughter, in all essential things, from the time when his knowledge of the case begins. I understand, moreover, that he asserts, that some of the language attributed to him respecting the paternity of Rhoda's child, was not correctly reported to the Council; particularly that in which he is represented as denying that the father of the child was a minister. And especially as I am informed, he asserts that Mrs. Davidson does not admit that her views are correctly expressed in the affidavits accompanied with her name. The affidavits were written by another; and, through agitation, or other means, at the time they were taken, she did not know sufficiently, or consider sufficiently, what they contained; and since, on looking over the published account, finds she is made to say things, particularly those derogatory to the veracity of her daughter, which are incorrect; which she never meant to say, and by which she cannot abide. It is unfortunate for the Reviewer that the further light which begins to shine up in regard to this matter, shines darkness upon his cause."

Perhaps the further light which begins to shine on this subject is not quite so dark as "A member of the Council" apprehends. If his mind is not too obtuse to admit further light, I should hope that the following facts might cast in a little more. What Mr. Davidson said to responsible individuals in Boston I know not; but I *do* know what he has said to other individuals equally responsible. He has said to *them* that "the father of Rhoda's child was not a minister;" and they are ready so to testify on the stand. He has said too that his daughters have acted like fools, but that he must protect them. With regard to Mrs. Davidson, I can *prove* that she gave her depositions with perfect freedom, uninfluenced by *money* or *persuasion*. I can *prove* that she said from all she knew, she had as much reason to believe that Mr. Shailer was the father of Rhoda's child as myself, and that she said this of her own accord, without any question being proposed which would lead to such a remark. I can *prove* that her depositions were read over to her carefully and deliberately; and when this sentence was reached: "My husband said he had seen a person who Rhoda

da alleged was the father of her child, and that he *positively and solemnly denied all knowledge of her, or of being its father*," there was a pause; and it was read a second time, and the question asked her if it was so? and she said, *yes*. I can *prove* that *since the trial*, she has confirmed the substance of her affidavits to a merchant in Boston of the first respectability, who called at her house, and that she did it *freely and voluntarily*. I can *prove* that at the time when her depositions were taken, she expressed a strong desire (which was not granted,) that a similar paper might be written and left with her for her husband to sign as soon as he returned from sea, saying that she had not a doubt but that he would sign it. I can *prove* that Mrs. Easty has since been to see her mother, and immediately *after* her visit, there was a remarkable change in her mother's views. She was evidently alarmed, lest some evil should befall her daughters, probably fearing that they might be punished for what they had done. I can *prove* that Mrs. Easty has told different stories respecting this affair; and her very manner upon the stand, and the contemptuous terms in which she spoke of ministers ought to satisfy "A member of the Council," that little credit is due to such a witness, especially when testifying against a clergyman. I can *prove* that when Mrs. E. had returned from Edgecomb to Boston, a gentleman connected with the family by marriage, told Mrs. Davidson that he did not believe that I would prosecute Rhoda, if she would only clear me by telling the truth, and that he was himself willing to give bonds to that effect: to which she replied, "I do not see how it can possibly be helped." Is not this enough to satisfy "A member of the Council" as to the cause of this wonderful change in the mother? Does not this satisfy him that "the further light which begins to shine up in regard to this matter," shines something besides darkness on the case?

There are other things which I can prove when the proper time comes. But this may suffice for the present. And now I would ask "A member of the Council" whether he was acting a Christian part in sending forth to the world the paragraph above quoted? If his cause be a *good* one, it certainly does not need to be sustained by such means. If it be a *bad* one, the sooner he ceases to defend it, the better; for he will gain nothing in the end by any further attempts to destroy an innocent man, however strongly *he* may be convinced of his guilt. "Judge nothing before the time. Do unto others as you would that others should do unto you." If a portion of the Christian public believe me innocent, and are desirous of hearing the Gospel from my lips, why should "A member of the Council" take such pains to destroy this confidence and thus prevent me from proclaiming God's truth to those who may wish to hear me? If I were restored to my office, the gentleman and all associated with him in sentiment and feeling, would still have the control of their own pulpits. And they may be sure that I should never obtrude myself upon them, or give them any trouble.

I will only add that "A member of the Council" represents Rhoda as a truthful, unassuming, artless girl, and must therefore have justly accused me as her destroyer. But there are others quite as wise as himself, and much better acquainted with the practices of the wicked, who have said, on simply reading her own testimony, that if I were guilty, they had not a doubt but *she* was the seducer. One or two instances now occur to my mind. A highly respectable physician in Boston, whose profession makes him far better acquainted with such matters than "A member of the Council" can be, has said that, from her own account of the affair, it was

his opinion that if I ever had any connection with the girl, she was the seducer, but he doubted her story, for had it been true, she would have shrunk at the bare thought of exposing herself in that public manner, and nothing would have induced a modest, virtuous girl to do so. And on the morning of her arrival at Exeter as my accuser, she said that she did not care about meeting the Council or the Assembly, but she *dreaded meeting me*. And well she might; for she knew that she was about to accuse me *falsely*. And an orthodox deacon in one of the Churches in Boston has been heard to say that not one in ten, and perhaps not one in twenty who thought I might be guilty, believed that I seduced her, but that it was directly the reverse. So much for her apparent artlessness and modesty, as represented by "A member of the Council."

I will here subjoin a letter recently received from Mr. Riddel, Chairman of the Committee of the Suffolk South Association, together with my reply.

BOSTON, OCT. 18, 1844.

DEAR SIR:—At the last meeting of the Suffolk South Association, held on the 1st inst. the subject of your relations to the Association came before that body for consideration. It was concluded that, before proceeding to a final decision, opportunity should be given for the investigation of those parts of the evidence in your case which, owing to the absence of the witnesses, there was some uncertainty in the minds of a portion of the Council. I refer particularly to the testimony of Mr. and Mrs. Davidson. Mr. Davidson being providentially in Boston at the time of the meeting of the Association, was invited to come in, and to communicate what knowledge he had upon the subject. He did so. But as his statements did not, in several important respects, agree with yours before the Council, it seemed suitable that you should have an opportunity of confronting him in person, if it should be your wish to do so.

The Association therefore, appointed the same Committee which had officiated in this matter before, to take such steps as might be requisite, to prepare the way for a decision on the question of your connection with their body, at their next meeting on the 1st Tuesday of November.

After deliberation the Committee have requested me, in their name, to write to you, and propose that you should meet Mr. and Mrs. Davidson, before the Suffolk South Association in Boston, at the time above stated. If you agree to this, and give us seasonable notice, we will endeavor to procure their attendance.

Should you object to coming to Boston for this purpose, please to propose some other way in which the interview can be had; or in which Mr. and Mrs. Davidson can be personally examined in a manner satisfactory to you; and your proposal will be taken into consideration by the Committee.

In behalf of the Committee.

S. H. RIDDEL, *Chairman*.

To this letter I made the following reply.

EXETER OCT. 23, 1844.

DEAR SIR—Yours of the 18th inst. was duly received, and would have been answered at an earlier period, had I not been immeasurably pressed by other matters. I do hope that neither yourself, nor the other members of the Committee will construe my *delay into contempt*.

You speak of Mr. Davidson being providentially in Boston. This event might have been *providential* to you and the Association. But it could hardly have been spoken of as such in relation to my enemies who, I have not a doubt, procured his presence in Boston at *that very time*, and for *that very purpose*. Be this as it may, you suggest the plan of my meeting Mr. and Mrs. Davidson before the Suffolk South Association on the first Tuesday in November. To this proposal I utterly object, and for reasons which I need not now state, but which you will doubtless soon learn through another channel. But I am willing to meet Mr. and Mrs. D. on the following conditions.

1. That this meeting be held in Portland, in the presence of Messrs. T. W. Chadbourn, Samuel Merry, Amos S. Hagget, and Samuel G. Wilson of Edgecomb, Isaac L. Folsom of Exeter, and Stephen Jenney of Boston. And

2. That the Association appoint a new Committee from their body to attend that meeting, *excluding yourself and Dr Beecher*. My chief reason for requiring such an exclusion, (and which must, I think, be sufficient, (is the *manner* in which you conducted the prosecution against me in Exeter. You then evidently transcended the limits of your appointment, as you will at once perceive by casting your eyes on the vote of the Association which appointed you, and which was passed at their meeting in June, held in the Vestry of the Phillips Church. You were not appointed as *prosecutors*; but you acted the *part of the prosecutors to the full extent*—no lawyers could have gone beyond you in that respect. Whereas it had been uniformly represented to me that you were coming to Exeter, as my friends uncommitted, with minds open to conviction, and as ready to receive and appreciate evidence in my favor as against me. But you

acted a very different part, and were instrumental in deposing a man from the ministry for crimes of which he was as innocent as yourselves. You deceived me then. That was *your* fault. If you deceive me again, the fault will be *my* own.

The man who appears before a Council previously "prepared to sum up the evidence in the case, and bring it before the Council in its proper connexion, to enable them how to act," must surely be regarded as a prosecutor. To deny it is to quibble. And as to the part which you yourself acted, it would be an insult to adduce arguments to prove that *you* acted the part of a prosecutor. Every man who was present to hear your examination of the principal witness, or who has read it, must be satisfied as to the capacity in which you acted before the Council. You proposed questions of such a nature and in such a form as no Court of Justice would have suffered a single moment,—questions too, previously prepared and all written down, together with the answers; and if the answers *given*, did not agree with the answers *written*, it seemed evident to me, and probably to others that there was some expedient adopted by which to make the agreement perfect. This was your method, "Did he, or did he not?" "Did you or did you not?" You thus put leading questions to the witness through all her examination. Is this the way to elicit the truth, and nothing but the truth? Why not let the girl tell her own story in her own way? Surely, she had been *long enough* in preparing it, and had doubtless received *help enough*, and committed it *well enough*, and rehearsed it *times enough*.* If the Council wished for further light, then let them ask such questions as they chose. Do you say, in justification of your strange course, that in your mind there was no doubt of my guilt, and that you felt constrained, by a sense of duty, to adopt it, lest, by some means or other, a guilty man should escape? And was it honest and fair thus to commit yourself in a case of so much importance to the ministry and the Church, on mere *ex parte* testimony, without hearing or regarding the evidence on the other side? Be it so, that you came to the Council with your mind made up. What then? Why, you should have regarded yourself as totally unqualified for acting the part you did. For the light of evidence to such a mind can find no access. What could have closed your eyes to the fact that the witness was falsifying the truth on the stand? Was it pride of opinion, and the fear that those to whom you had already expressed your conviction as to my guilt, might say that you were mistaken? However this may be, you must have perceived, I think, that the very first statement of the girl upon the stand was *proved* to be false. She testified that she occupied the attic during the absence of Mrs. Fairchild. *Whereas she never slept there a single night during her absence.* This was evident from Mrs. F's testimony, to say nothing of my own. Thus the very first scene in this drama was fictitious. This, one would think must have opened your eyes to the game which was then being played. But how came this, scene to be laid in the attic? I will tell you. The room which she actually occupied at that time adjoined a similar room of our neighbor's, the head of whose bed stood within twelve inches of her bed, with only a wall between them of the thickness of a single brick, and through which the sound of the voice in common conversation can be distinctly heard. The girl well knew that in case that room was then occupied, (and she had reason to suppose it was,) and no noise heard, the fact might have been adduced in evidence to weaken her testimony. And as she represented to the Council that there was the shutting of a window, as well as a great deal of resistance, and weeping, and a whole hour spent in attempts to console her, and of course considerable noise, she was doubtless aware that the outcry might have aroused the sleepers in the adjacent room. To avoid this difficulty, she represents the matter as having transpired in the attic, where no one was near to listen to the fracas.

Now if this fiction failed to opened your eyes, how could they have remained any longer closed, when you heard her swear that her mother never asked her who was the father of her child,—one of the most incredible things in the world, and when the mother deposed and said "she importuned, and threatened, and coaxed her to tell." But enough of this for the present. You will hear more about it by and by.

Now I would ask in all honesty and sincerity, can you blame me for refusing to meet Mr Davidson in your presence as a Committee, since you have seen him and obtained his own story as you did Rhoda's? And having thus got possession of his story, do you think that I will expose myself to the same treatment from you which I received before the Council? You have not forgotten, I presume, the scene which there transpired. If you have forgotten it, I never shall forget it. When the girl grossly insulted me by saying that "I had no apparent accountability to a Supreme Being," thus virtually calling me an atheist and an infidel I felt constrained to call on the Moderator for protection. And have you forgotten how soon you were on your feet claiming protection for the witness? What protection did she need? I had not uttered one insulting word. This act convinced me that your object was to close my lips, while her's were to be opened freely to tell what lies she pleased, uncontradicted and undismayed. From that moment, Sir, you had the management of the case in your own way, without further let or hindrance from me. But I consoled myself with the reflection that the time would come when I could speak untrammelled by you, and without the possibility of your putting a seal upon my lips. And that time is approaching. If I were to meet Mr Davidson, and he should deny the truth of my published statements of what passed between us when he came to see me in Boston, I should deem it my duty to charge home upon him his falsehood, because every word which I have there published is strictly true. And do you think that I would consent to have you present to call on the Moderator to protect him, or, by availing yourself of the story he has

* A younger sister has been heard to say to a lady with whom she formerly lived, that the story was written down for Mrs. Easty and Rhoda, that they committed it to memory, and rehearsed it to each other, and asked one another questions, that they might have it perfect.

already told you, to inquire "did he or did he not," say so and so? Can you expect me to give you another such opportunity to frighten and browbeat me? Never, by my own consent, will I again be caught in such a trap.*

Perhaps I ought to mention to you that soon after Mr Davidson returned from sea, I received a letter from one of his neighbors, stating that Mr D. had expressed a desire to see me, and advising me to gratify his wishes. Accordingly, I went to Wiscasset, within four miles of his house, and sent him word that I was ready to see him. But he could not be prevailed on to come near me. What was the reason? Before my arrival he had doubtless received his cue from Boston; and he probably refused to see me because he would not *then* have dared to deny the truth of what I stated to the Council. And if he *ever* denies it, I have not a doubt it will be in order to sustain his daughter- and to get his reward, as they have done.

I respect and love the Association, and never would a breach have been made between any of us, had not some of their number permitted themselves to be imposed upon by the testimony of a false witness, who was doubtless *hired* to swear away my character.

If the Association see fit to comply with my terms as to the proposed meeting, they may fix upon such a time as will best suit their own convenience. That is a matter altogether immaterial with me. If they do not comply, I have only to suggest that if they will suspend action for a month or two, it is possible that some new light may dawn upon the subject, whereby they will be enabled to act with a clearer understanding of the true merits of the case.

Yours, &c.

J. H. FAIRCHILD.

I will subjoin an extract from a letter now before me recently received by a friend, from Mr. Samuel Merry. You will recollect that Mr. Merry is the gentleman to whom Mr. Davidson said among other things, that the father of Rhoda's child was not a minister. He is a near neighbor of Mr. Davidson, and a member of the church in good standing.

"What Mr Davidson told me concerning that man and Rhoda I can state as long as I have my senses. I have not heard Mr Davidson say one word about the affair since he came home. I want you to write to me soon, if you think that I shall be called upon to go to Boston, on account of laying out my business, so that I can leave home."

Since writing the above, a letter has been put into my hands written by T. W. Chadbourn, Justice of the Peace, in whose presence Mrs. Davidson's depositions were taken, and who is one the selectmen of the town.

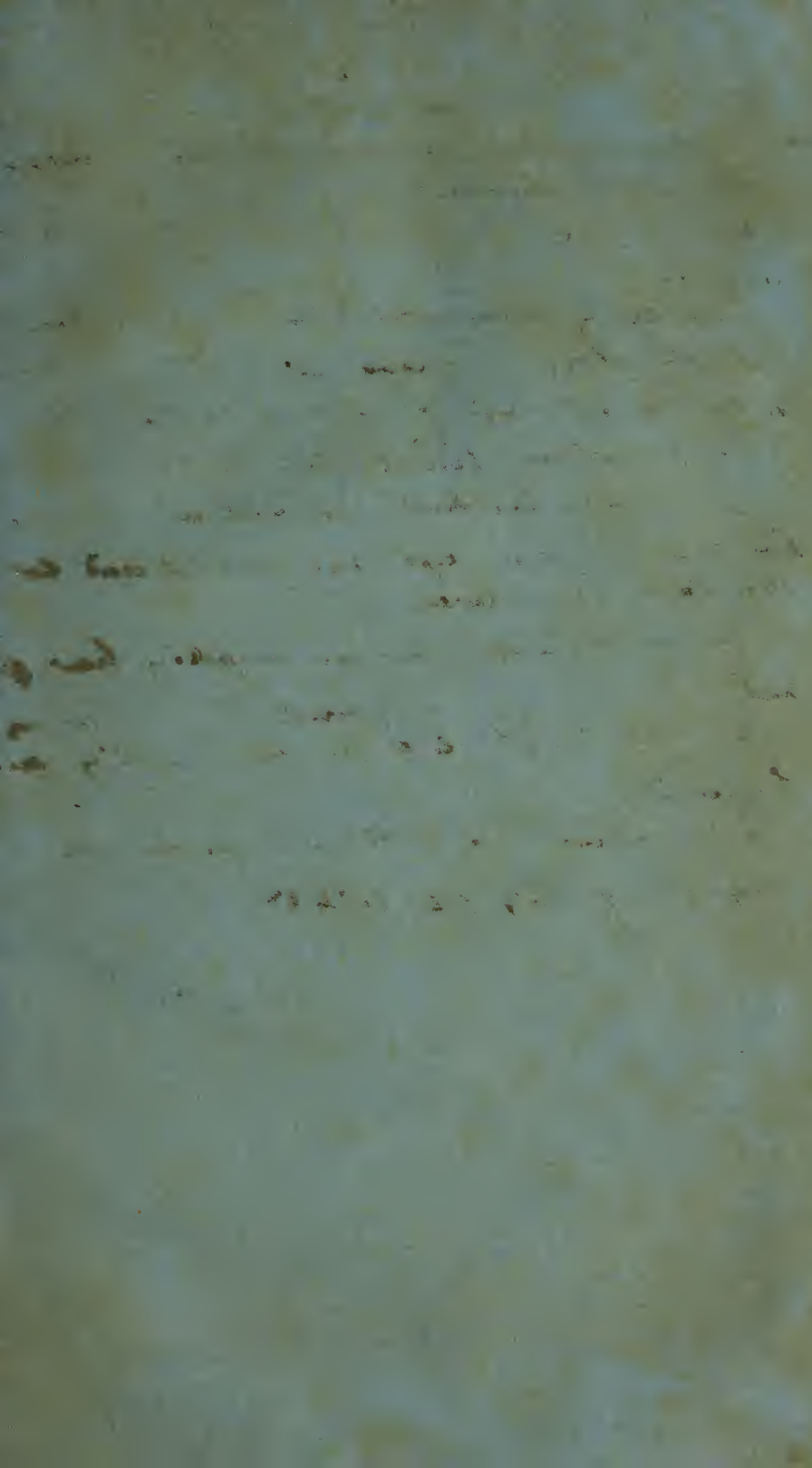
EDGECOMB, OCT. 25, 1844.

"To whom it may concern, I hereby certify that I was present with Mr Folsom when Mrs Davidson made the statements contained in her affidavits. I heard Mr Folsom read the first affidavit to Mrs Davidson, and she said the statements were correct, and she freely signed the same, and made oath to the correctness of the same before me. I read the second affidavit to Mrs Davidson myself, and she acknowledged it to be correct, and freely signed the same, and made oath to its correctness before me. I also certify that Mr Folsom used no unfair means, nor held out any inducements to Mrs Davidson to get her to testify as she did. Mrs Davidson made said statements cheerfully and freely, and with all apparent sincerity, and I saw nothing to induce me to believe that Mrs Davidson did not sincerely believe every statement she made to be perfectly correct.

Your friend and obedient servant,

T. W. CHADBOURN.

* As I forgot to mention in this letter one important circumstance, I will state it here. After my evidence was all in, Mr Riddel occupied the attention of the Council for a long time in reading a paper containing a recapitulation of the evidence of the two witnesses against me, thus giving to the Council a double dose of the nauseous stuff. Having thus refreshed their memories, which was virtually a summing up on his side, the motion was made by some one in sympathy with him, that the case should then be submitted, without any formal pleading on either side. I yielded for reasons already mentioned, and thus lost the opportunity of recapitulating my evidence, and made no defence at all. Truly he so managed as to have every thing in his own way; and therefore it was no wonder that the Council came to a verdict of condemnation. Indeed, he was evidently bent on my destruction from the beginning; and when he thought it was accomplished, he goes home and writes a letter to a friend, boasting of his achievement! I could not help thinking of this passage, "whose tender mercies are cruel."



he succeeds in smothering his opponents but
see but little clearing of his own character
his ridicule of their watching him amounts
to little they saw, or thought they enough to
justify close observation.

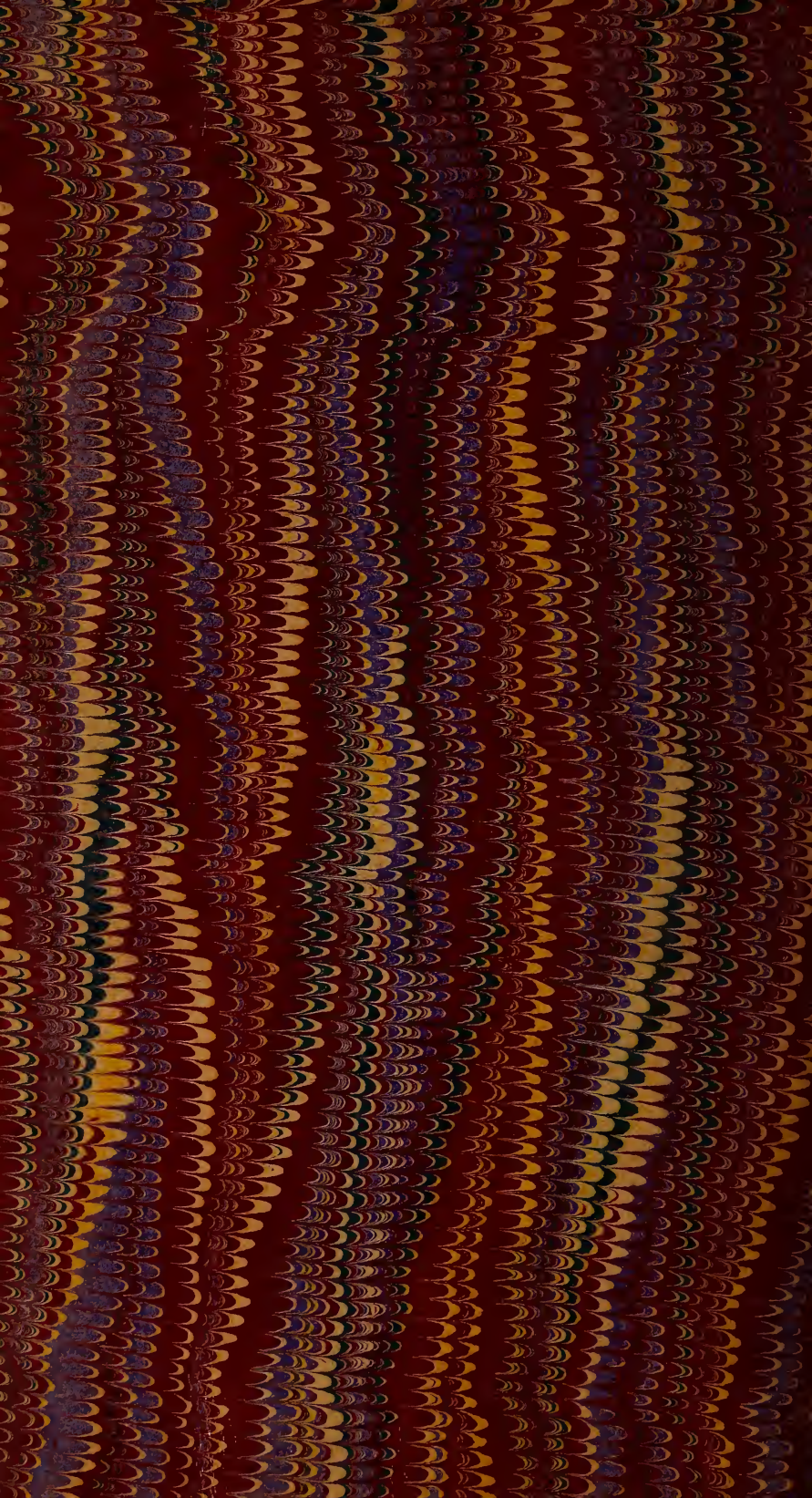
The 3 dollars to the young school mistress do
look well.

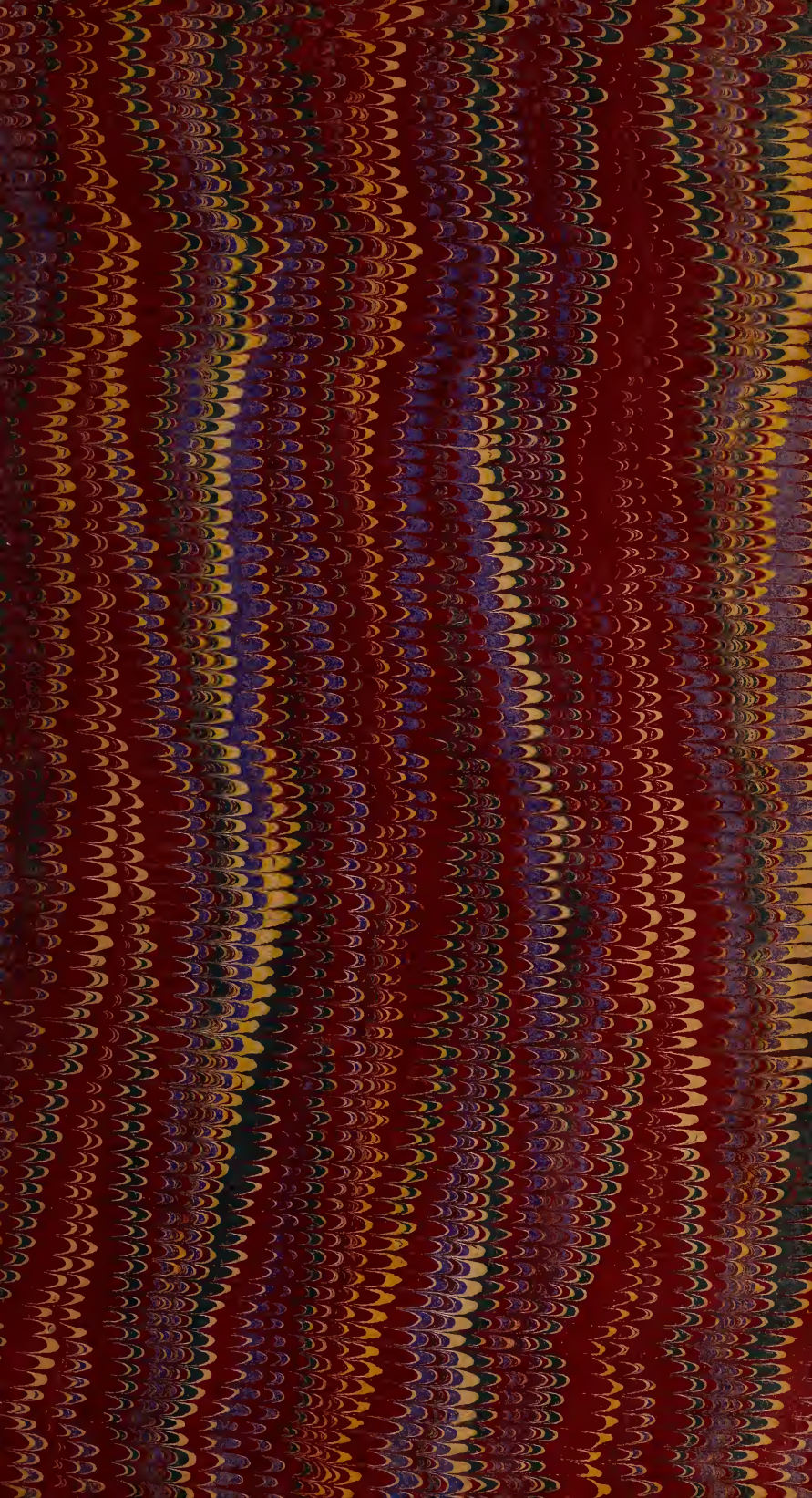
He constantly represents Rhoda as enabled to
tell the story - Inana was it a crime
to tell a falsehood or offering to place her
in a situation disinclined to tell the truth.

I think if she had promised as she did
she should have kept her promise and let
the tale its course -

He complains of her for breaking her promise
but represents it as against the Deacons
that they kept silent in debt meeting and
Council -

My views are still much as in the
Gazette of July 12 1846





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